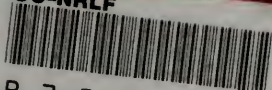


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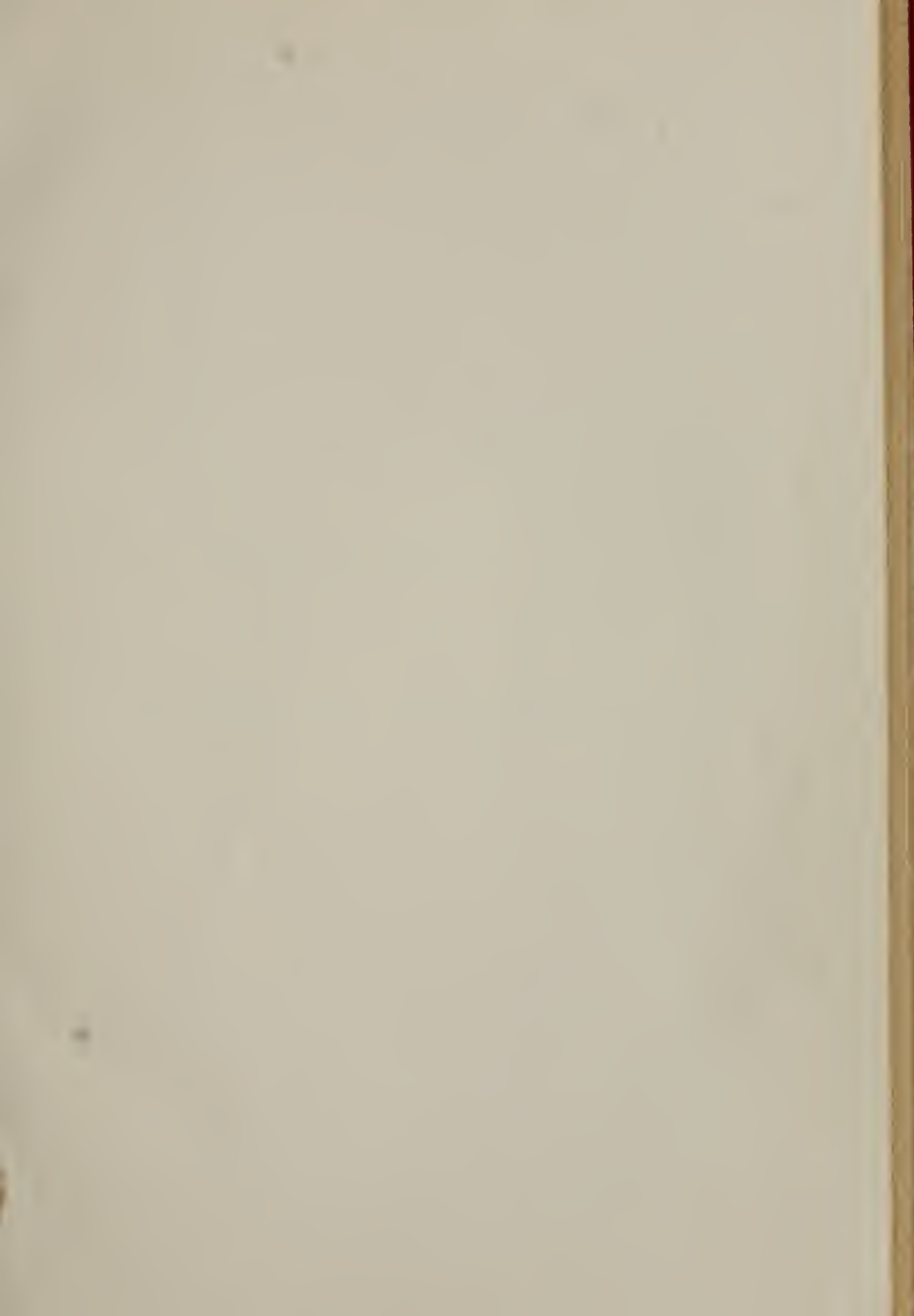














The Elizabethan Shakspeare

VOLUME I

THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH



The Elizabethan Shakspeare

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

A NEW EDITION OF SHAKSPERE'S WORKS WITH CRITICAL  
TEXT IN ELIZABETHAN ENGLISH AND BRIEF NOTES  
ILLUSTRATIVE OF ELIZABETHAN LIFE  
THOUGHT AND IDIOM

BY  
MARK HARVEY LIDDELL



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TO  
ARTHUR S. NAPIER  
MERTON PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE  
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD  
THIS EDITION OF SHAKSPERE  
IS RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY  
DEDICATED



## GENERAL PREFACE

*THE aim of this new edition of Shakspeare is twofold: to give the modern reader an accurate critical text of Shakspeare's works in the language of Shakspeare's time, and to interpret this in the light of Elizabethan conditions of life and thought and idiom.*

*When Nicholas Rowe in 1709 published the first modern edition of Shakspeare's plays, he printed the text in the English of the eighteenth century and explained its divergencies from the idiom then current as being due to the obsolete words of the 'old print' and to the 'corruptions' of the early printers. Where the text was to him unintelligible he amended it to suit his notions of what Shakspeare should have written.*

*The apparent unintelligibilities, confusions, and imperfections of Shakspeare's writings when read as eighteenth-century English and weighed by the exact and formal mind of Pope, Shakspeare's next editor (1725), were even more frankly acknowledged than they had been by Rowe. Pope, however, assigned them to the peculiar defects of Shakspeare's genius: "It must be owned that with all these great excellencies he has almost as great defects; and that as he has certainly written better, so he has perhaps written worse than any other." Guided by this belief, Pope made numerous changes and "improvements" in Shakspeare's text.*

*Theobald, in his edition, 1733, took much the same attitude to Shakspeare's supposed imperfections that Pope did, and wrote: "As in great piles of building some parts are often finished up to hit the taste of the connoisseur, others more negligently put together to strike the fancy of a common and unlearned beholder, . . so in Shakspeare."*

## GENERAL PREFACE

“Nullum sine venia placuit ingenium, says Seneca. The genius that gives us the greatest pleasure sometime stands in need of our indulgence.” Theobald, therefore (to use his own words), set himself the task of emending the corrupt passages, of explaining the obscure and difficult ones, and of inquiring into the beauties and defects of composition. His guiding principles were admirable: “Wherever the author’s sense is clear and discoverable (tho’, perchance, low and trivial), I have not by any innovation tamper’d with his text out of an ostentation of endeavouring to make him speak better than the old copies have done. Where, thro’ all the former editions, a passage has labour’d under flat nonsense and invincible darkness, if, by the addition or alteration of a letter or two, or a transposition in the pointing, I have restored to him both sense and sentiment, such corrections, I am persuaded, will need no indulgence. And whenever I have taken a greater latitude and liberty in amending, I have constantly endeavour’d to support my corrections and conjectures by parallel passages and authorities from himself, the surest means of expounding any author whatever. Cette voie d’interpreter un auteur par lui-même est plus sûre que tous les commentaires, says a very learned French critick.”

While these principles and this practice were far in advance of the scholarship of Theobald’s day, Theobald’s edition laboured under the same disadvantages as did that of Pope,—namely, the assumption that whatever was unintelligible in Shakspeare when read as eighteenth-century English must likewise have been unintelligible to Shakspeare’s audience. He says there are very few pages in Shakspeare upon which “some suspicions of depravity do not frequently arise.” Again, “as to his style and diction, we may much more justly apply to Shakespeare, what a celebrated writer has said of Milton: Our language sunk under him, and was unequal to that greatness of soul which furnish’d him with such glorious conceptions. He therefore frequently uses old words to give his diction an air of solemnity, as he coins others to express the novelty and variety of his ideas”—modern appreciations are often quite as ill founded as is this one of Theobald’s.

## GENERAL PREFACE

*These two eighteenth-century editors of Shakspeare, Pope and Theobald, though such bitter rivals, both recognized a certain amount of obscurity in Shakspeare's language as they understood it, and each in his own way endeavoured to alleviate it or palliate it for contemporary readers. In the one we have the prototype of the literary, in the other the prototype of the critical editor of Shakspeare. Warburton (1747) and Johnson (1765) followed more or less closely in the footsteps of Pope; Capell (1768), Steevens (1773), and Malone (1790, 1821), followed in the footsteps of Theobald. But they all printed Shakspeare's text in the current idiom of their day, and explained its divergencies as being due to obsolete words, depravity of text, and the general inadequacy of language to the task Shakspeare imposed upon it.*

*The nineteenth-century editors largely occupied themselves with adding to the explanatory material already collected by their predecessors and emending the text in a growing spirit of conservatism. Dyce (1857) enriched the work of Steevens and Malone. The first edition to show the impulse of the critical method which, during the middle of the last century, did so much to purify our texts of Greek and Latin classics was that of Delius (1854), which is in some respects superior to the work of the Cambridge editors. Delius's edition, too, contained evidence of that careful and scholarly judgement which bore such rich fruit in Germany during the latter part of the last century. The Cambridge edition, begun in 1863, finished in 1866, and revised in 1887, carried this critical scholarship a long step in advance, furnishing a conservative text with, for its time, a minimum of emendation, and supplying a more or less complete apparatus for textual study. This text has usually been reprinted with slight variations in recent editions of Shakspeare. In 1871 was begun a *New Variorum* by Horace Howard Furness, collecting in convenient form a vast number of notes and emendations of previous editors. But in the nineteenth century, as well as in the eighteenth, Shakspeare has invariably, save in the case of Dr. Furness's *Variorum*, which copies the *First Folio* punctuatim et literatim, been modernized and transliterated into the current idiom.*



## GENERAL PREFACE

*Thus in two centuries of editing, Shakspeare's works have usually been printed as if the differences between Elizabethan and current idiom were largely a matter of obsolete words, and this modernized text has usually been interpreted from the standpoint of modern idiom. The consequent obscurities and confusions have been set down with more or less insistence to the two causes stated by Theobald, viz. the depravity of the text and the inadequacy of the English language to express Shakspeare's great thought. Through the labours of successive generations of Shakspeare scholars the number of the 'depravities' has been greatly reduced, and the 'obscurities' illustrated and more or less clarified. But Shakspeare is still given to us in modern English dress and interpreted to us as current idiom, and a large number of apparent depravities of text and obscurities of diction still remain to puzzle the modern reader.*

*For a full half-century it has been known that the development of a living language such as our English consists not merely in an abandonment of a certain part of its vocabulary, but in successive alterations of its entire structure. Its sounds, the stresses of its syllables, its inflectional modes, its syntactical habits of collocating words, its prosodic forms, the delicate shadings of meaning and connotation which are conveyed by its words and idioms,—all these undergo a continuous process of transformation, sometimes rapid, sometimes slow, the net result of which is that the idiom of one period fails to express for a succeeding generation its original content and meaning.*

*No single work of actual scholarship has contributed so much to the explanation and elucidation of this scientific principle as has the Oxford Dictionary. The resources which this one book places at the disposal of the Shakspeare scholar of the present century put him in possession of a means of understanding apparent depravities and inadequacies which Shakspeare's earlier editors did not dream of.*

*But not only this: the stimulus of new scientific methods has set to work the English scholars of America, England, and Germany at recasting and rearranging the whole subject of English in the light of the facts of its historical development. The fresh knowledge that has re-*



## GENERAL PREFACE

sulted gives a new interest to 'text depravity,' and invests the apparent quaintnesses and abnormalities of the 'old spelling' with a new meaning. Words and idioms which were thought to be 'corrupt' in Shakspeare's text turn out to be normal forms of expression in normal forms of representation. For instance, in "We have scorch'd the snake, not kill'd it" *Macbeth* III.2.13, the "scorch'd" of Shakspeare's text, which has been changed by a 'happy emendation' of Theobald's to the 'scotched' of all modern editions, is a normal Middle English word-form still in use in Elizabethan literature and employed in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle*; though here, as in Shakspeare, it has been assumed that the "scorch'd" of the half-dozen independent editions of Beaumont and Fletcher's text is a misprint in each case for 'scotched.' And, notwithstanding that the r looks like such an obvious 'depravity' of an original t, "scorch'd" meaning 'scored' or 'hacked' was the word Shakspeare used. And so in *Errors* V.1.183, where this same word describes the scratching of one's face; though here some editors explain it as meaning 'sing' and others emend to 'scotch.'

Likewise, the obscurity of diction so readily laid to Shakspeare's charge vanishes away when we confront it with a modern historical knowledge of Elizabethan idiom. For instance, in such a phrase as "Let not my jealousies be your dishonors, But mine owne safeties," *Macbeth* IV.3.29, we do not have a vague expression of the thought, 'I am jealous for my honour: but this jealousy implies no dishonour to you; think of it merely as proceeding from my care for my own safety,' but a sharp, clear, and idiomatically expressed notion, 'Let not my suspicions be a cause of shame to you, but a safeguard to myself,'—a notion that has more clearness and definiteness in its Elizabethan form than it is possible to give it in a modern translation.

Depravity of text undoubtedly is to be reckoned with in Shakspeare. Incorrect punctuation, misprinted words, bad line divisions, and occasional dislocations of the sense were undoubtedly frequently overlooked by the proof-readers in early editions of the text. But these depravities are normal and human, and are not much worse than those that occur

## GENERAL PREFACE

*in the other printed books of Shakspeare's time. They are to a large extent such mistakes as we should expect to find in the work of any author whose writing was not revised and corrected by the author himself. But the compositor's capacity for error has its limitations: he does not make "pi" of his own language. If the reader will consider the hundreds of emendations that have been proposed for the text of Macbeth, traditionally regarded as one of the worst printed of Shakspeare's plays, and subsequently been shown to be due to editorial unfamiliarity with Elizabethan English, he will see that this invocation of the deus ex machina of corruptness to solve the text problems of Shakspeare has been appealed to needlessly in nine cases out of ten.*

*As to the inadequacy of English speech to convey the greatness of any one's thought, our language has never failed to rise to any emergency that English thinkers, small and great, have created for it. Indeed, in the very nature of language such an inadequacy can never exist, because language is thought itself, and the possession of the power of creating great thought carries with it ipso facto the capacity of putting that thought into form. Shakspeare is never superior to his idiom: indeed, no thinker of English ever demonstrated more clearly the capacity of our language for clear, direct, and forthright expression. We should be as careful, therefore, in invoking this explanation of 'obscurity of diction' to help us over a difficult passage as we should be in resorting to assumptions of corruptness, lest in charging Shakspeare with obscurity we convict ourselves of ignorance.*

*It is the purpose, therefore, of this new edition of Shakspeare's works to bring this new learning to bear on the elucidation of Shakspeare's text, and to give new point to the illustrative material collected by the editors of the last two centuries, with the single aim of making the sense of Shakspeare's English clear and inevitable to the modern reader.*

*And while we may not succeed to the full in clearing from all its obscurities the text of Shakspeare, or in illustrating to the complete satisfaction of the modern reader the implication of Shakspeare's thought and idiom, yet we hope to be able to push the great work of interpreting*

## GENERAL PREFACE

*Shakspeare a step or two along its course, and to point the way to a fuller comprehension of the greatest and mightiest piece of literature, save one, that the human mind has produced.*

*The text of this edition is a critical one newly compiled from the various Quarto and Folio sources in the light of their known relations to one another, and not selected from them with the purpose of obtaining the most literary and, from the modern standpoint, the most easily intelligible form in which the plays might have been written. As the basis of the form of the text the Folio of 1623 has been chosen because it presents the uniformity of a collected edition, and its English is essentially that of Shakspeare's time. This text is printed in the forms of Elizabethan English, not from any desire to preserve the " quaintness " of the original, nor yet from any philological pedantry, but simply because the scholarship of the last quarter-century has made evident the importance of reading Elizabethan literature in the language in which it was written, and not in modern transliterations or translations of it.*

*But while the spelling of Shakspeare's English is an essential element of its structure indicating essential distinctions of sound, the typographical peculiarities of the Folio, such as the capitalization of important words and the printing of the letters ſ, i, and u for s, j, and v, are distinctions which have only formal and not essential significance. The punctuation system, too, of Elizabethan English is a formal method of pointing thought that is different from our modern one, but does not indicate thought divisions essentially different from those of modern English. It is therefore unnecessary to preserve these formal peculiarities of printing, and the editor has followed the system adopted by the Oxford Dictionary for quoting Elizabethan literature, with the sole distinction of substituting modern capitalization for Elizabethan.<sup>1</sup>*

*Significant variant readings, where there is more than one independent source of the text, are given in their original form. Mere variations in spelling and readings of Quartos or Folios which are not independent*

<sup>1</sup>The capitalization of important words is not peculiar to the Folio, but was a common practice of Elizabethan printing-offices.



## GENERAL PREFACE

*sources of the text are omitted. These latter are of no more weight in determining the text than are modern guesses. Conjectural emendations are not noticed unless they supply in the place of a word obviously unintelligible as Elizabethan English another word-form which makes apt sense in Shakspeare's time, and can be assumed as the basis of a more or less evident printer's error. In short, it is the aim of the text and of the critical notes to present the work of Shakspeare simply and clearly in a form which Shakspeare himself would understand, and one as nearly like the form he may be supposed to have given his writing as a conservative application of the principles of evidence can attain to.*

*The aim of the explanatory notes is to bring together in brief space and compact form such material as is necessary to the clear understanding of Shakspeare's text. Those which have to do with glossarial explanations aim to give as accurately as possible the exact shade of meaning which Shakspeare's words had at the time they were written. Many Elizabethan locutions, while not entirely obsolete in modern English, nevertheless suggest a range of associated ideas that is quite different from those they now suggest. In the misunderstanding of these Elizabethan connotations lies the ground of the charge of obscurity which is so frequently brought against Shakspeare's thinking: an intimate understanding, therefore, of these word meanings is necessary not only to an intelligent comprehension of Shakspeare's text, but is also necessary to an appreciation of the literary quality of his writing. Left to himself, the modern reader can only guess at these connotations, and his guess, as is evident from the explanations of almost any edition of Shakspeare, does not always hit the mark. Very frequently a delicate implication or a fine reference is missed in this process of guessing. The editor, therefore, has preferred to incur the criticism of "insulting the reader's intelligence" (as it is called) by glossing these obsolete connotations, rather than that any should miss the full meaning of Shakspeare's words by not being familiar with Elizabethan idiom. The glossarial notes are not intended to set down inferences more or less obvious from the context, but are designed as far as possible to give a definite authority for*

## GENERAL PREFACE

such an inference. And in all cases either a reference to the Oxford Dictionary is cited in justification of the meaning given, or a reference from contemporary literature is appended to show that the reader's inference (if he would naturally make it) is authorized by contemporary usage.

The same plan has been followed in respect to the grammatical idiom of Elizabethan English. These illustrative references are given as far as possible in the language of Shakspeare's time; their sources indicated; and where they have been made use of in earlier editions due credit has been given to the editor who first pointed them out. In some cases it has been necessary to cite them in modernized forms because the original quotation has not been accessible to the editor. Such citations are distinguished from the others by being printed within single quotation-marks. Brief notes of a literary character, or illustrating the dramatic action, have been added where it has seemed to the editor that these helped to a clearer appreciation of the text; and summaries of the dramatic action have been appended to the several acts to keep before the reader's mind the unity which the play would have when represented upon the stage.

The numeration of the Globe Text, which has come to be the classic one and is now used in standard Shakspeare dictionaries and grammars, has been followed in this edition. Where the editor has seen fit to depart from the verse division of the Globe Text, or from the act and scene division, the departure has been carefully indicated, and Globe references appended in small type at the side of the text.

The form in which the note matter is arranged about the text, reviving a fifteenth-century method of note-composition, with some slight modifications to suit modern conditions of printing, has been adopted to secure ease of reading and beauty of typography.

It only remains to say that the editor is not insensible of the deep obligation which he owes to the Shakspeare scholarship of the past, as well as to that of the present. The labours of Steevens and Malone (whose wide reading in Elizabethan literature furnished rich material for the modern editor to draw upon), the careful work of the editors of the Cam-

## GENERAL PREFACE

*bridge Text in accurately recording the variants of the Quartos and Folios, the learning and perspicacity of Nicolaus Delius, the substantial work of Dr. Furnivall and the New Shakspeare Society, the photographic facsimiles of the Quartos (largely due to Dr. Furnivall's energy), the fine Staunton facsimile of the First Folio, the valuable material in the German Shakespeare Jahrbuch, the careful compilations of the Variorum editions, especially of Dr. Furness's modern Variorum—all these have contributed to lighten the present editor's task and enrich his work. A modern evaluation of the Shakspeare scholarship of the past two centuries is not necessarily a light one because modern scholarship seeks to give its results a new bearing and a fresh interpretation. Though ideals of editing may change, faithful and earnest work abides, and the old wisdom dies not with the advent of the new learning. Beneath the mask of Shakspeare's easy fluency there lies a revelation of human nature that is as broad as the earth and as deep as the sea. No one scholar, no one generation of scholars, can compass its interpretation. As long as men shall live, and till the thoughts of all hearts be revealed, there will be material for new thought in the pages of Shakspeare. The danger that Shakspeare study has to fear is not the multiplication of new editions, but the classicization of a single edition which all shall possess and no one read.*

M. H. L.

Summit, N. J., January, 1903.



## INTRODUCTION TO MACBETH

*MACBETH* belongs to that group of great dramas, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *Lear*, which marks the culmination of Shakspeare's literary development. These plays were all produced in the first decade of the seventeenth century, probably between 1602 and 1606.<sup>1</sup>

The date of *Macbeth* is now usually set down as 1606. The earliest certain mention of the play<sup>2</sup> is a note in Forman's *Diary* roughly describing the tragedy as he saw it acted at the *Globe Theatre* on the 20th April, 1610 (April 30th N. S.).<sup>3</sup> But the reference to the double crowning of James at *Scone* and at *Westminster*, the allusion to equivocation in connection with treason,<sup>4</sup> the flattering description of Edward touching for the king's evil, and, if we recall the legal aspect of the Scottish James's succession to the throne of Elizabeth, the unusual notion

<sup>1</sup>Cp. *The Succession of Shakspeare's Works*, being Dr. Furnivall's introduction to the English translation of Gervinus's *Commentaries*, 1874, p. xlv.

<sup>2</sup>Farmer thought that the lines in *The Puritan or Widow of Watling Street* (a play published in 1607 and now usually assigned to Middleton), 'Instead of a jester we'll have a ghost in a white sheet sit at the head of the table,' contain an earlier reference to *Macbeth*, and Farmer's notion has been revived in recent editions of Shakspeare. But, as Professor Manly has pointed out (*Macbeth*, Longmans, 1876, pp. x ff.), these words have been taken from their context, and their reference is to a ghost in *The Puritan*, not to Banquo's ghost.

<sup>3</sup>Forman's entries are random moralizings for "common pollicie," suggested by the plays he saw, among them three of Shakspeare's, the entries concerning which

are reprinted in the *New Shakspeare Society's Transactions*, 1875-1876, pp. 415 ff. They are preserved at Oxford in *Ashmolean MS. no. 208*. The note on *Macbeth* occurs at leaf 207, article x, and begins: "In Mackbeth at the glod [sic], 1610, the 20 of Aprill 5, ther was to be obserued," etc. Forman, who was an astrologer, in this as in the other entries wrote the astronomical sign corresponding to the day of the week, here that of Saturn for Saturday, but these marks were overlooked by the N. Sh. Society's copyist. The entry was evidently made from memory in 1611, and, besides being inaccurate in its description of *Macbeth* (see note on p. 122), is in error in so far as the 20th of April in 1610 fell upon a Friday, not upon a Saturday.

<sup>4</sup>It has recently been argued that the 'farmer' who hanged himself is a punning allusion to the Farmer of the gunpowder treason; but see the note to the passage.



## INTRODUCTION TO MACBETH

of 'affeering' a royal title, all point to an earlier date, at least for the composition of *Macbeth*, than Forman's note would give us.

For although the defence of equivocation is a subject of popular and literary reference well into the middle of the seventeenth century, and panegyrics on the Union abound for a generation after the kingdoms were united,<sup>1</sup> it is hardly likely that Shakspeare would have referred to James's peculiar scruples about the king's evil (see note on p. 180) much later than 1605. The king soon forgot them himself. The spirit of the play also points to the early years of James's reign, when interest in early Scottish history was keen and the king's own discussion of witchcraft was fresh in the public mind. We are not apt to be far wrong, therefore, if we assume 1605 as a rough date for *Macbeth*.<sup>2</sup>

The version of the *Macbeth* legend upon which Shakspeare based his play he found in Holinshed's *Chronicle*:<sup>3</sup> it has not yet been made evident that he followed any other account than the one Holinshed gives.<sup>4</sup> This subject-matter, to the modern historian largely legendary, but to Shakspeare's contemporaries true history, was especially acceptable during the early days of the reign of James I, not only because the impulse to give a quasi epic form to the early history of Britain was a characteristic feature of the literature of the period, but also because the Scottish origin of England's new king was attracting public attention to Scottish

<sup>1</sup> The "treble scepters" in IV. I. 121 and the reference to the good year in the porter's speech are also usually taken as evidence pointing to 1606. But the former is not necessarily a reference to the Union, and the latter seems to have been a current jest of Shakspeare's time: see note to the passage.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Richard Garnett in the *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, vol. xxxvii, p. 214, in order to support the late 17th-century tradition that Shakspeare when living at New Place regularly supplied the London stage with two plays a year, has maintained that Forman's description is of a first representation of *Macbeth* in 1611, 'the play being withheld during 1610.' But 1610, and not 1611, is the date which Forman gives,—see the note on the preceding page,—and local Shakspeare traditions are exceedingly uncertain lights to follow.

<sup>3</sup> For evidence that it was the second edition of Holinshed and not the first that Shakspeare used, see the preface to Shakspeare's *Holinshed*, W. G. Boswell-Stone, Longmans, 1896 (also one of the publications of the New Shakspeare Society). This reprint is the most accurate and most convenient yet published. Others will be found in Delius's edition, 1855, Furness's *Variorum*, Clark and Wright's Clarendon Press edition, and in the various single-play editions of *Macbeth*.

<sup>4</sup> An attempt has been made to show that he also consulted William Stewart's *Chronicle*, ed. Rolls Series, 1858, a versified history of Scotland that is assumed to have been circulated in MS. form in Shakspeare's time; but the evidence is far from convincing. See *Athenæum* for July 25, 1896.

## INTRODUCTION TO MACBETH

history. Both of these interests are combined in Slatyer's *Palæalbion* with the inclusion of the Macbeth legend and the usual flattery of the reigning sovereign. Warner, too, in the 1606 edition of his *Albion's England* inserted the *Historie of Macbeth*. The fact that neither of these writers follows Shakspeare's story points to a general interest in the theme as associated with James's ancestors, rather than to a particular interest roused by Shakspeare's work. This interest is further shown by the circumstance that James, upon his visit to Oxford in August, 1605, was welcomed by a Latin entertainment representing the witch episode of the Macbeth legend and associating the king with the prophecy regarding Banquo's line.<sup>1</sup> Farmer thought that Shakspeare, notwithstanding his 'small Latin,' might here have obtained a hint for his compliment to James. And Farmer's view is not unlikely: for Shakspeare would have been indeed stupid had he not got sufficient learning from the Stratford grammar-school to enable him to read the sort of Latin that the play was couched in.<sup>2</sup>

Shakspeare's *Macbeth*, however, is not a chronicle play based upon dramatic events in the early history of his sovereign's native country. He condenses and boldly alters Holinshed's narrative, adapting the material to his purposes, and giving to history the unity and tense interest of tragedy.<sup>3</sup> He seizes on the theme which the story presented to him,—namely, the influence of the weird sisters' prophecy on Macbeth's career, an episode more or less incidental in Holinshed's account,—and with this Scottish Saul and his Witches of Endor, interpreted in the light of popular notions of witchcraft and the current psychology of insanity, builds up a tragedy whose motif is essentially the same with that of the *Heracles Mainomenos* of Euripides, or that of the classic

<sup>1</sup> See Farmer on the Learning of Shakspeare, apud Variorum, 1803, II, p. 54, or Simrock in publications of Old Shakspeare Society, 1853, p. 127: Simrock quotes Wake's Latin description of the play in its entirety.

<sup>2</sup> It is often assumed that Shakspeare could not read Latin at all: the fact that Ben Jonson said his Latin scholarship was inconsiderable is evidence quite to the contrary.

Jonson was one of the best Latinists of his time and duly proud of his accomplishments; Shakspeare's knowledge of Latin might have been 'small' in his scholarly friend's estimation and still have been quite sufficient to pose many a modern schoolmaster.

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, the introductory notes to Scene II and Scene V of Act I, and the summary at the end of Act II.

## INTRODUCTION TO MACBETH

and mediæval story of *Hercules Furens*, or that of the mediæval and modern *Faust* legend, a tragedy which in respect to unity and tenseness of interest is unequalled in the history of literature.

As the play has come down to us, we have it in the dress which Hemminge and Condell gave it in 1623, almost twenty years after its production. In it there are obvious interpolations.<sup>1</sup> It is characterized also by unusual condensation in style, probably due to the fact that it was intended to be filled out by spectacular additions, evidences of the existence of which are to be found in contemporary references and subsequent traditions in regard to its stage history. This condensation makes *Macbeth* difficult to read even when one is familiar with Elizabethan English. When it is read as modern English and due attention is not given to the current psychology of Shakspeare's time, the action seems abrupt and disconnected. Much of this unintelligibility has been charged up to careless printing, successive editors having perpetuated the notion that the text is an unusually corrupt one. But a careful comparison of the text of this edition with that of the First Folio will show clearly that *Macbeth* is not nearly so badly printed a play as it has been supposed to be. And a careful study of the Elizabethan word meanings and their implications will show a wonderful continuity and unity in the development of its thought, and will point to the conclusion that, save for the few obvious interpolations, all of which could be taken out without sacrificing its interest or hindering its movement, we have *Macbeth* essentially as Shakspeare wrote it.

✧ The theme of *Macbeth* is a favourite subject of Greek drama invested with Germanic interests—namely, the fatal consequences of the intervention of supernatural influences for evil in the affairs of men. ✧ And the power of the tragedy lies in the fact that we, helpless spectators, look on consumed with pity but unable to avert the doom. All of Shakspeare's greatest tragedies present to us the picture of a *mens insana*, a diseased soul whose powers are out of balance and out of tune

<sup>1</sup>These are discussed in the notes to the various suspected passages. See especially the introductory note to Scene V of Act III.



## INTRODUCTION TO MACBETH

through the excess of some one faculty dominating the others and overthrowing the "state of man" which Macbeth speaks of in I.3.140. In Hamlet it is a mind essentially weak from excess of deliberation, "a resolution [i. e. will-power] sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought [i. e. brooding anxiety]," that defeats a noble purpose and wrecks a noble soul. In Lear we have the tragic results of a single foolish act, a single fatal aberration of judgement, proceeding from an excess of caution. It is the "consequence"—using the word in its Elizabethan sense—of this that produces the *mens insana* and mocks the noble hope of an old age to be spent in the happy comfort of filial care. In Othello it is a pitiful jealousy, arising from an excess of credulity and causing melancholia (an aspect of the *mens insana* in Shakspeare's time: see Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, passim), that shatters a noble love. Hamlet, Lear, Othello, Macbeth are all, in the language of Elizabethan psychology, "distempered" souls.

But Macbeth is different from the former three in having a moving cause from without. Like Hercules, as he returns victoriously from the scene of his conquests, the furies invade his soul, and he becomes *maimenos*, *furens*, 'regarding neither law of God nor law of man.' The modern reader misses much of this aspect of the play by putting modern meanings upon the words in which it is involved, and letting their sense go for literary when he cannot clearly understand them. So that when Shakspeare for the first time presents this notion of an invasion of Macbeth's soul by the powers of evil in the implication of Macbeth's own words, Shakspeare's thought gets lost in the vagueness of the modern translation. The modern reader, too, is prone to overlook the nature and significance of the embodiment of these powers of evil which Shakspeare presents in his witches.<sup>1</sup> He sees the instigating machinery of the tragedy as a mere incident in the course of its development. But Shakspeare's conception of these agencies was far otherwise. The powers of darkness and their evil instruments were to him and to the common people of his

<sup>1</sup>A glance at Scene V of Act III will show clearly, also, how the careless interpolator missed the meaning of these moving influences of the tragedy.

## INTRODUCTION TO MACBETH

day horrible realities, fleshly embodiments of evil to be met with in every countryside. No mere theological figures to express the spiritual aspects of the evil tendencies of the human soul, they really entered men's bodies and took possession of the house, ruling all for their wicked ends. Thus, as were the classic furies to the Greek mind, these powers of evil were to the Elizabethan actual personalities lying in wait for those they would destroy. The literature of the time is full of this notion. Even Bacon reflects it. James was interested in the subject and wrote his tract on demonology to counteract the juster notions that were appearing from time to time in the tracts of liberally minded theologians. The whole force of the law of England was brought to bear against the poor creatures who were thought to be possessed by these demons of evil, and not till a century after Shakspeare's time did this notion of the actual entrance of the devil into the body of man lose its hold on the imagination of men. Even yet, in out-of-the-way corners of popular superstition and belief in England and America, can one find it lingering. The story of Macbeth, therefore, is one of that class of themes which represent an ambitious man as bargaining with the devil and selling his soul in exchange for power. And if the reader is to get a clear notion of the essential tragedy of Macbeth's harried life he must bear this in mind.

In Holinshed Macbeth already belongs to an heroic period of British history; but Shakspeare adds touches here and there, giving more sharpness to the epic characteristics. In the opening scene of the play the hero towers vast and bulky above all others in the battle, tearing his way single-handed through an opposing army of rebels and cleaving their leader from neck to navel in true Homeric fashion, while Bellona smiles proudly on the glorious achievements of her beloved minion. It is an epic and Homeric picture. This heroic aspect of Macbeth comes out again when he returns in triumph to receive his meed of praise from Duncan and be hailed in triumph as the saviour of his country. These epic characteristics flash forth from time to time throughout the play, perhaps nowhere more clearly than when Macbeth longs for the former age ere human statute had purged the gentle weal—when the brains

## INTRODUCTION TO MACBETH

were out the man would die! — the time when a man could go straight to his purpose, be it foul or good, and gain his end in a forthright way. His virtues are heroic: when he plans to murder Duncan it is the heroic notion of the rites of hospitality and the patriarchal notion of allegiance to a just king that stay his hand, not the thought of killing an innocent old man in cold blood. It is his fear of the taunt of cowardice that nerves him to the deed itself. It is the dread that he will have to drink the same cup that taints his joy: he 'll gladly risk the life to come. And when the powers of evil get hold of his imagination and poison his soul at the spring, his vices become heroic too; and, being heroic, they are interesting, possessing that fatal attraction which magnificent strength has even when viciously applied. Thus the wild havoc which the victim of these instigations works suggests no "vulgar criminal," but a Hercules furens, and awe and pity overpower our loathing of his crimes. Euripides's treatment of this theme in its general outlines presents striking similarities to Shakspeare's handling of the Macbeth story — similarities due to the fact that the methods of great art are eternally the same; and perhaps it will be worth our while for a moment to glance at this, in a certain sense, Greek prototype of the English Macbeth.

The colossal and heroic figure of early Greek history, like Macbeth, has his soul invaded by the furies as he is returning triumphant from one of his great labours; and Euripides's play is the tragic consequence of this supernatural invasion. Hercules's madness, however, is of a simpler and more elemental character than Macbeth's. Made furens by these powers of evil, he murders his dear ones. In Macbeth's case the instigation is more subtle, less objective; the evil influences seize upon a strong ambition of kingship already firmly planted in Macbeth's mind and fostered by a native imagination of unusual strength, and work upon this to poison his soul. Hercules, when he again recovers his sanity and sees in its true light the enormity of his crime, is plunged into despair, and on the brink of suicide exclaims that 'his bark is full fraught with horrors.' Macbeth, looking back over the long train of bloody yesterdays and helplessly involved in their tragic consequence, is like-



## INTRODUCTION TO MACBETH

wise on the brink of suicide—"Out, out, breefe candle!"—and in the bitterness of his despair he too exclaims, "I have supped full of horrors."<sup>1</sup> Hercules recovers his former self through the ministrations of friendship and Euripides's play comes to a redeeming end; Macbeth does not wholly recover,—the poison has worked too deeply for that,—but the necessity for action rouses his titanic will in something like its early strength, and his manly end at least suggests the redemptive note.

These two dramas, then, while written to meet radically different conditions of interest, have a certain subtle kinship with one another that seems deeper than a mere accidental coincidence. For Macbeth, while not insane in our modern sense of the word, is essentially mad when his acts and words are viewed in the light of Elizabethan psychology. He has that 'great imagination proper to madmen': the shaping fancies of his seething brain 'apprehend more than cool reason ever comprehends.' The poet, 'of imagination all compact,' comes out clearly in his first words, "So foule and faire a day I have not seene," as he blends together in his thought the blustery, fitful, stormy day and the battle he has just passed through. Thus at the very outset Macbeth is presented to us as a dreamer of dreams. And all through the course of the play it is rather the poetic visions which he sees than the facts which are that lead him on from day to day. The natural influences which surround him and the supernatural powers which he thinks are brooding over his career glorify with their misty haze every one of his soliloquies. When the instruments of darkness deprive him of his sovereignty of reason and drive him into madness, he is the lunatic, the madman, 'who sees more devils than vast hell can hold.' Life becomes one long, changing 'fever,' and 'what's a fever but a fit of madness?' These restless 'extacies,' these 'fever fits,' as Shakspeare calls them, using the technical language by which the physician of his time described this kind of alienation, make the 'torture of the mind' that becomes the Nemesis of his tragedy.

<sup>1</sup> Likewise Macbeth's "I have lived long enough," etc., has an interesting parallel in the words of Seneca's Hercules: "Cur animam in ista luce detineam amplius, Mor- resque, nihil est: cuncta iam amisi bona." (This parallel was pointed out by Professor Munro in the *Journal of Philology*, Vol. VI, p. 70 ff.)



## INTRODUCTION TO MACBETH

The evidences which show that Shakspeare conceived Macbeth as suffering from a 'mind diseased' are to be found rather in the language which he uses to describe its symptoms than in the text itself. If one reads these words with their Elizabethan connotations, and notes their application to various forms of alienation in the technical literature of the subject as it was in Shakspeare's time, especially as gathered together in Burton's great treatise on insanity, he will see clearly that Shakspeare intended to represent Macbeth as a person of unsound mind.

This is not the historical Macbeth of Holinshed. Dr. Furness (*Variorum*, p. 359) suggested that Shakspeare got his hint for Macbeth's hallucinations from Holinshed's story of the unquiet mind of Kenneth after the murder of his nephew Malcolm, the son of King Duff: cp. Boswell-Stone, p. 30. But in this account of Kenneth's unquietness it is only one voice and one unquiet night that are described; the visions are absent. In Buchanan's *Historia Rerum Scoticarum*, cap. vi, which was extant in Latin in Shakspeare's time (1st ed., 1582), and might easily have been accessible to him, we have the words: "Tamen animus, conscientia sceleris inquietus, nullum solidum et sincerum ei gaudium esse permittebat; sed intercurtantibus per otium cogitationibus sceleris fœdissime interdum vexabatur; et per somnum observantia visa horrore plena quietem interpellabant. Tandem sive vere vox cœlo edita est, sive turbatus animus eam sibi ipse speciem finxerat," etc. This gives us the picture of Macbeth's torture almost exactly as Shakspeare conceived it.<sup>1</sup> It will be remembered, also, that it was Buchanan who made the suggestion that the Macbeth story was fitter for dramatic pur-

<sup>1</sup> Shakspeare, in describing Macbeth's mental torture, employs verbiage that sounds very like a rough translation of Buchanan's Latin; one can almost fancy him reading it: "animus conscientia sceleris inquietus"—his mind in 'restless ecstasy' with the consciousness of his guilt—"nullum solidum et sincerum ei gaudium esse permittebat"—kept him 'dwelling in doubtful joy,'—"sed fœdissime interdum vexabatur"—and he was continually 'tortured'—"cogitationibus sceleris"—by thoughts of his wicked deed in 'send-

ing' Malcolm 'to his peace'—"intercurtantibus per otium"—and could 'gain no peace' for himself,——"et visa horrore plena"—but 'terrible dreams' and 'visions'—"observantia"—'afflicting' him—"per somnum quietem interpellabant"—'shook him nightly';—"sive vere vox cœlo edita est"—either he heard a voice from heaven crying 'sleep no more, Kenneth doth murder sleep'—"sive"—or—"turbatus animus"—his 'diseased mind'—"ipse eam speciem sibi finxerat"—itself 'informed' thus to his guilty ears, etc.

## INTRODUCTION TO MACBETH

poses than for historical—"quia theatris aut Milesiis fabulis sunt aptiora quam historiæ." If Shakspeare did not get his hint direct from Buchanan,—and he might easily have done so,—he could well have obtained it from current literature, since Burton refers to the story as a sort of commonplace illustrating an unquiet conscience.<sup>1</sup>

Macbeth's own realization of his 'possession' is rather the vague consciousness of a mysterious disturbing power within him than a clear acknowledgement of the fact that he has sold his soul to the powers of darkness. He knows that he is sick, but until the very end of the play he thinks his 'rooted sorrow' is temporary; action will rid him of it; to-morrow he will be well: to-morrow the consequence will be tramelled up. If Banquo becomes a disturbing element to his peace of mind, he will get Banquo out of the way and to-morrow be at peace. If Macduff rises to take Banquo's place as a disturber of his peace, he will wade on through the stream of blood, and to-morrow, having gained firm ground on the other side, he will sleep in spite of thunder. So it is—to-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow—peace ever just beyond until the end comes and he is face to face with his shattered life, his broken hopes, lighted by yesterdays the way to dusty death. Life is meaningless, a gibbering idiot's tale, a strutting actor's rant, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.

And at last, too late, poor Macbeth comes to the bitter realization that the juggling fiends have been paltering with him in a double sense, keeping the word of promise to his ear and breaking it to his hope, lying like truth; that his rooted sorrow has been planted by himself. With one last frenzied tug he tears it from his mind, and is almost himself again when, defying fate as well as men, his life goes out in the flaming words "Lay on, Macduffe, And damn'd be him that first cries 'Hold, enough!'"

<sup>1</sup>Burton, 'Anatomy of Melancholy' III.4. ii.3, quotes the substance of Buchanan's description: 'Kennetus, King of Scotland, when he had murdered his nephew Malcolm, King Duff's son, Prince of Cumberland, and with counterfeit tears and protestations dis-

sembled the matter a long time, at last his conscience accused him, his unquiet soul could not rest day or night, he was terrified with fearful dreams, visions, and so miserably tormented all his life.' (A foot-note shows that he cites Buchanan from memory.)

## INTRODUCTION TO MACBETH

*The contributory characters to his tragedy are sketched in with a few touches, sharp enough for clear definition, but never with sufficient detail to make them of paramount interest: Lady Macbeth, Banquo, Macduff, Malcolm. With marvellous skill, Shakspeare prevents even the most important of them — Lady Macbeth — from becoming a paramount theme. At the beginning the woman, as the instigator of Macbeth's first step in his bloody course, does threaten to absorb the reader's whole attention. But Shakspeare withholds the details which would contribute to this end and, instead of giving them in their proper place, reflects them backward into the action after Macbeth has become the paramount theme, and there is therefore no danger of weakening our interest in the main current of the action.*<sup>1</sup>

Banquo, too, is kept in the background, though we would gladly know just how Banquo felt about Duncan's murder, the authorship and motive of which he must have suspected, and what he really thought about the witches' prophecy promising kingship to his family. When we come to Macduff, the danger of a subsidiary theme becoming of paramount interest is over, and Shakspeare gives us more detail because the detail will now heighten the interest of the external climax of the tragedy without marring its unity.<sup>2</sup>

Lady Macbeth's possession by the powers of evil, which in the havoc it works is essentially the same as Macbeth's, is yet so carefully differentiated from Macbeth's madness in the manner of its inception that the unity of interest in the play is in no way marred. The insidious combination of ambition and supernatural soliciting in Macbeth's case is counteracted by a natural manliness and a "milk of human kindness" that make a continuous and interesting resistance

<sup>1</sup> A short-sighted criticism, reading Macbeth in modern English as a tragedy of events rather than one of character, has gone so far as to assume that these detailed actions—for instance, the planning out of Duncan's murder either by letter or in conference in the early part of the play—were represented in the original copy of Macbeth but have been

left out by accident or through abridgement for practical purposes of stage representation.

<sup>2</sup> Here again criticism has cavilled at the disproportionate amount of attention which Shakspeare gives to the plans of Malcolm and Macduff to restore the Scottish throne to its rightful heir, the objective and spectacular culmination of the drama.



## INTRODUCTION TO MACBETH

to the 'disenfranchisement of his bosom' and the dethronement of his will. And when this struggle is over the fact that his imagination is the strongest element of his mental character, and that it is only necessary for the instruments of evil to work upon that to produce the mental torture which forms the Nemesis of Macbeth's tragedy, furnishes a new interest for the course of the play. Lady Macbeth, however, is presented to us not only as not resisting the powers of evil which threaten her peace, but as furiously invoking their entrance into her soul.

After she has accomplished her purpose of inciting Macbeth to the murder of Duncan, she fades out of the drama and becomes a merely passive subject in the hands of fate, emerging only to her final doom in the last act. The invoked powers of evil immediately poison her will. Macbeth says of himself that his state of man is thrown into insurrection, and this insurrection is the theme of his tragedy; but there is no insurrection in Lady Macbeth's case because there is no resistance; her executive instruments themselves are evil, and even her hints are fatal.<sup>1</sup>

The internal unity of theme and interest in Macbeth is complemented by an external unity of form that is peculiar to this among Shakspeare's great tragedies. This unity of structure is secured by the insertion of narrative scenes between the several acts of the play to serve the purposes of the Greek chorus. Through the influence of Seneca on Elizabethan play-writing this form of dramatic structure was not unknown to Shakspeare's contemporaries. Shakspeare's very practical adaptation of it shows clearly what a stage master he was. Indeed, he has been so successful that modern criticism has failed to notice these linking scenes as being at all external to the main interest of the tragedy. Their character and their peculiar effect in uniting and making one picture of a long series of events will be best observed by reading them in their places with a consciousness of their dramaturgic import.

Another striking characteristic of Macbeth is its absence of perspec-

<sup>1</sup>It is going far afield to assume that a blood feud existed between Lady Macbeth and Duncan's house. There is no trace of this in the action or phraseology of Macbeth, and no contemporary version of the story attaches any importance to it. Indeed, the whole thing is a motif evolved from the mind of a foreign critic of the play.

## INTRODUCTION TO MACBETH

*tive. Its scenes are presented to the imagination with such sharpness of outline and at the same time with such conciseness of interest that the whole tragedy becomes a single picture. The play is peculiar in this respect. Its main action is sketched out at first more or less roughly; but as we watch the unfolding, details which really belong to scenes that have passed the immediate vision of the mind's eye are filled in to recall that past and bind it in with the present. As a work of art Macbeth is thus in its æsthetic unity a marvellous achievement, because to a certain extent it transcends its own limitations. In a great picture or in a great piece of statuary, a single moment of interest is pressed upon the attention by the skill of art in such a way that all which has preceded that particular moment and all that will follow is at once seized upon by the comprehending imagination, which of itself knows not the limitations of time and space. The interest of a great work of literature, however, is a consecutive interest, moment succeeding moment in rhythmic pulse and all contributing to a final impression when we reach the end of the series. But Shakspeare in his Macbeth, by the simple device of adding fresh detail to recalled scenes, keeps the whole tragedy as it were before the mind's eye at one time. One of the most interesting and important scenes in the whole play is the murder of Duncan, yet we do not get the full details of this scene at the time of its enactment. We merely get the impression of a deed of horror done in darkness. When the scene, however, is recalled at the end of the play in Lady Macbeth's sleep-walking, it comes into the imagination, as Shakspeare represents it, not with a loss of detail as is usually the case in a recalled experience, but with added detail which it did not have before. Just a word—a single association or two—gives the past act a new and present interest. The time analysis of the play considered as history covers a period of some score of years. Right in the middle of it is a gap seventeen years long. But when viewed by the imagination as Shakspeare forces us to look at it, Macbeth is crowned at Scone yesterday and to-day o'erthrown at Dunsinane. Yet, paradoxical as it may seem, while the action is thus brought before us as a single conspectus, this is done*

## INTRODUCTION TO MACBETH

without sacrificing the interests which come from a long course of development. Little hints and suggestions, word associations, all the subsidiary interests of literature, combine to suggest the result of a long course of events in single moments. While the action of the play has been rushing along through a few days of rapid dénouement, Macbeth passes from middle age into the sear and yellow leaf. He tastes the whole bitterness of despair in a succession of disappointing yesterdays stretching back through a lifetime of defeated hopes. Shakspeare's power in securing this unity and continuity at the same time, thus presenting action as it comes to us in dreams without the limitations of time and space, is well illustrated in Hamlet where the clock strikes twelve in the opening of the first scene and three minutes afterward strikes one without producing any sense of incongruity in the reader's mind.

Still another characteristic of Macbeth which is well worth the reader's attention is the wonderful fitness of its rhythms. It is not only in its verbiage one of the most poetical of Shakspeare's plays, but is also, in the way in which the rhythmic flow of their attention stresses reflects the notions expressed by his words, one of the most poetic plays of that period when he had fully learned the power and use of English rhythms. There is no surer mark to distinguish his later from his earlier poetry than this harmonious fitness of speech rhythms. And in no respect is the distinction between the interpolated matter in this play and Shakspeare's own work sharper and clearer than in the difference between the rhythms of the added matter and Shakspeare's own. There is no poetry in English literature in which such perfect rhythmic fitness in the movement of the thought is secured without the sacrifice of a single idiomatic locution or graphic word association as we have in Macbeth, Othello, Hamlet, and Lear. Some of these harmonious rhythm series are pointed out in the notes, but there has not been space sufficient to include a notice of anything like their full number.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The relation of such rhythm series to the structure of English poetry is briefly discussed, with special reference to Shakspeare's verse, in *An Introduction to the Study of*

*English Poetry* (Doubleday, Page & Co., 1902, pp. 275-305), and the nomenclature and notation there explained are employed in the ensuing notes.



## INTRODUCTION TO MACBETH

These are but a few of the characteristics of this great tragedy, second only to *Hamlet* as a picture of the overthrow of a human soul. Shakspeare is his own best commentator, and a clear understanding of the meaning and implication of his words in the senses which they bore when he used them is a surer guide to a full appreciation of his works than all the books that have been written about them.

The only textual source for *Macbeth* is the Folio of 1623. This undoubtedly gives us an acting version which, if not one of Shakspeare's "blotless papers," at least comes as near being an authorized edition as any version we shall ever have. No change, therefore, has been made in its verbiage save for the attempted corrections of its indubitable misprints.<sup>1</sup>

In consonance with the general plan of the edition, the text is presented in the language of Shakspeare's time. But the reader hardly needs to be told that Shakspeare's words may be pronounced as the English of to-day without serious detriment save to the sound-colouring of his verses<sup>2</sup>—may the time soon come when even this drawback to the full appreciation of Shakspeare's poetry shall be removed!

The abbreviations used in the notes are in the main self-explanatory, or in such common usage as to need no explanation here. The constantly recurring words "Old English," "Middle English," and "New English," connoting respectively the periods of our language from the beginning to 1025, from 1025 to 1550, and from 1550 to the present, are represented by the current abbreviations O.E., M.E., and N.E. These are often further qualified by the words 'early' and 'late,' respectively abbreviated to e. and l. The Folio and Quarto Texts of Shakspeare are represented by FO. and QO. followed by the numeral which indicates their respective places in the series. The Oxford, or New English, Dictionary is represented by N. E. D., and the Century Dictionary by Cent. Dict.; the number or letter following the abbreviation represents

<sup>1</sup> A list of these will be found in the Index.

<sup>2</sup> The chief peculiarities of Elizabethan word representation are arranged in the Index under the rubric Spelling, and a prelim-

inary glance at the references there given will enable the reader easily to surmount stumbling-blocks that might otherwise halt him from time to time in the course of his reading.

## INTRODUCTION TO MACBETH

the peculiar sense of the word referred to. After the reader has become familiar with them the titles of the early New English dictionaries are abbreviated to Cooper, Minsheu, Alvearie, Coles, Glossographia, Phr. Gen., etc. Save where special note is made, I cite these dictionaries in the following editions: Baret's *Alvearie*, 1580 (1st ed.); Coles's *English Dictionary*, 1713 (1st ed., 1677); Coles's *Latin Dictionary*, 1679 (1st ed., 1677); Comenius's *Janua Linguarum Reserata*, translated by Horn and Robotham, 1643 (Horn's translation is dated 1634); Cooper's *Thesaurus*, 1573 (1st ed., 1565); Cotgrave's *French Dictionary*, with Howell's supplement, 1650 (1st ed., 1611); Cowel's *Law Dictionary*, 1684 (1st ed., 1607); Florio's *Italian Dictionary*, 1611 (1st ed., 1597); Glossographia, 1707 (1st ed., 1656); Holyoke's *Latin Dictionary*, 1677 (1st ed.); Kersey's *English Dictionary*, 1708 (1st ed.); Minsheu's *Ductor in Linguas* (containing 1st ed. of Percivale), 1617 (1st ed.); Percivale's *Spanish Dictionary*, 1623; Phillips's *New World of Words*, 1678 (1st ed., 1658); *Phraseologia Generalis* (*The Cambridge Phrase Book*), 1681 (1st ed.); Sewel's *Dutch Dictionary*, 1708 (1st ed.); Skinner's *Etymologicon*, 1671 (licensed 1668); Thomas's *Latin Dictionary*, with Holland's supplement, 1620 (1st ed., 1596); Withal's *Little Dictionarie for Children*, 1556 (1st ed.). The names of the various learned societies whose publications are frequently referred to are abbreviated as follows: O. Sh. Soc., *The Old Shakspeare Society*; N. Sh. Soc., *The New Shakspeare Society*; *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, or *Jahrb.*, the *Jahrbuch der deutschen Shakespeare Gesellschaft*; E. E. T. S., *The Early English Text Society*; Sp. Soc., *The Spenser Society*; Per. Soc., *The Percy Society*.

The names of the various editors of Shakspeare whose work is referred to will be found chronologically arranged in Furness's *Variorum*, or in the *Preface to the Cambridge Edition*, or in Mr. Lee's *Life of William Shakespeare* (pp. 361 ff.). Professor J. M. Manly, whose excellent school edition of *Macbeth* appeared in 1896, should be added to the list. The title of the Clarendon Press edition of *Macbeth*, by Clark and Wright (Oxford, 1878), I have shortened to Cl. Pr. The titles of the books from

## INTRODUCTION TO MACBETH

*which illustrative quotations have been drawn are cited in the forms given in the New English and the Century dictionaries, and are in the main self-explanatory. Its date usually accompanies each citation. The abbreviations of the titles of Shakspeare's works are practically those employed by the Oxford Dictionary and do not need explanation to the Shakspeare student. The marks ' and " indicate primary and secondary grades of stress: unstressed impulses are left unmarked. The conventional turned e (ə) represents the vowel sound of an unstressed syllable, or the sound of u in 'but,' 'cut,' etc.*

*My indebtedness to my predecessors has already been acknowledged in the General Preface. But I desire especially to express my obligations to Schmidt's Shakspeare Lexicon, for many finely discriminated definitions; to the Century Dictionary, for many supplementary Elizabethan quotations; and to the Clarendon Press edition of Macbeth, for many valuable cross-references.*

*The practical and mechanical difficulties attendant upon the form of composition have been many and various, and I should be indeed ungrateful if I did not acknowledge the unfailing courtesy of the publishers and the ready skill of the printers in coping with these, commonly counted the humiles et sordidæ curæ of editorship. And in this connection I must also express my deep obligation to the good sense and good taste of my assistant, who has relieved me of much of the burden of arranging the note-matter in such a way as to make possible, under modern conditions, a fifteenth-century form of printing.*



THE TRAGEDIE OF  
MACBETH



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

corresponds to Modern English (MN.E.) 'over': cp. I. 7. 1. ¶4 BATTLE is an Elizabethan English (EL.E.) spelling of the word due to the retention of its Middle English (M.E.) form. ¶5 In TH' SET and TH' FOGGE (v. 11) we have illustrations of the loss of the vowel of the definite article common in EL.E. both in poetry and in prose and whether the following word began with a consonant or with a vowel. The evidence of this is found in EL. printing and in the versification of careful writers: cp. "from th'rest" Drayton, 'Barrons Warres' v. 63. 7; "affright th' most senselesse thing" *ibid.* 11. 66. 5; "in th' daies" (prose) Dekker, 'Knights Conjuring,' Percy Soc., p. 33. We have probably an evidence of this elision in the apostrophe in such printing as "would here set" peacefull period to my dayes" Ben Jonson, 'Sejanus,' 1640, p. 341, and "Well said, this carries 'palme with it" 'Poetaster' p. 300. (The phenomenon still survives as a peculiarity of modern dialect English; see Prof. Wright's 'Dialect of Windhill,' Eng. Dial. Soc., 1892, pp. 91 and 110; in the Windhill dialect the remaining spirant is further reduced to *t*.) The elision is of very frequent occurrence in Macbeth. We may assume, therefore, that the printer of the Folio in these two cases neglected to denote the omission by the customary apostrophe of EL. texts. Pope's excision of the article here and in v. 11, and Abbott's attempt to explain HOVER in v. 11 as a monosyllable, are due to efforts to make the verses perfectly rhythmical in MN.E. ¶6 HEATH in EL.E. rhymed with MACBETH, the vowels of the two words differing only in quantity, and was sounded as if rhyming with MN.E. "faith." Almost without exception, *ea* in Shakspeare has nearly the sound of *a* in MN.E. 'make' and *ay* in MN.E. 'day,' viz. a long close *e*-sound, and our present *i*-sound for this vowel, as in MN.E. "heath," is nearly a century later than Shakspeare. ¶7 The scansion "Thère to méet with Macbéth" forces a strong pause after MEET and thus gives peculiar impressiveness to WITH MACBETH. The loss of an unstressed syllable after a cæsural pause is of common occurrence in English verse and gives no occasion for the numerous emendations which supply a monosyllabic adjective like 'brave' or 'great' before MACBETH. ¶8 In the Folio I COME, GRAY-MALKIN is assigned to the First Witch, having 'I' before it. What follows is printed as a couplet, preceded by the stage direction 'All.' It is probable, however, that after v. 9 some 'stage business' of the witches intervened, like the dance in I. 3. 32 ff., abruptly ended by the summons of the *nuntius* spirit (see note to III. v. 34), and that the witches then vanished singing the couplet in vv. 10 and 11. Shakspeare uses for the names of his witches' familiars GRAY-MALKIN, the common appellation of a cat, like MN.E. 'Tabby,' and PADOCK, the M.E. and EL.E. word for toad: cp. Gifford's 'Dialogue concerning Witches,' 1603, ed. Percy Soc., p. 19: "Witches have their spirits . . . some in one likenesse and some in another . . . as like cats . . . toades . . . or mice, whom they nourish with milk or with a chicken." On the same page is a story of a witch who "had three spirits, one like a cat which she called Lightfoot, another like a toade which she called Lunch, and a third like a weasill which she called Makeshift." The punctuation of the Cambridge Text in v. 9, "Pad-dock calls—anon!" follows Capell, 1768, departing from that of the Folio and assuming ANON to be an answer to Padock's summons, 'Coming!' But as punctuated in the Folio the expression is natural and makes good sense, i. e. 'Padock will summon us presently': for the use of the present tense, cp. "Farewell, thou Lob of spirits, I'le be gon, Our queene and all her elves come here anon" Mids. 11. 1. 16. There is therefore no good reason for altering the text. ¶10 In EL.E. FAIRE and FOULE mark off a sharper and more fundamental distinction than they do now, nearly that of right and wrong, a distinction which Shakspeare makes frequent use of; cp. the many instances in Schmidt *s.v.* 'fair.' ¶11 The notion of the powers of evil HOVERING in the air is also found in John III. 2. 2, "Some ayery devill hovers in the skie, And pours downe mischiefe." FILTHIE has since Shakspeare's time acquired a strong connotation of disgust: see Mr. Bradley's note on the history of the word's meaning in the New English Dictionary (N. E. D.). To the ears of Shakspeare's audience it meant only 'murky,'

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SCENE II

The subject matter for this scene comes from Holinshed's *Historie of Scotland*, 1587, pp. 169 ff. But Shakspeare aptly fits this historical material to his dramatic purpose. Holinshed describes four successive battles in which Macbeth took part: in the first he puts an end to the rebellion of Macdowald; in the second he, Banquo, and the king are defeated at Culros by Sweno, the King of Norway, who immediately after the victory over Macdowald invades the realm of Scotland; in the third, the Scots having drugged the Norwegian soldiers by mingling the "juyce of mekilwort berries" with their food, Macbeth falls upon them and destroys their army, Sweno and ten others escaping to their ships; in the fourth Macbeth and Banquo defeat an avenging incursion of the Danes sent by Canute and arriving while the Scots were still celebrating their victory over Sweno. The 'composition' of vv. 59 ff. is the result of this battle. "And these were the warres that Duncane had with forrayne enemies in the seventh yeare of his raigne."

Shakspeare rolls these four into one, linking the last three with the first by hinting that the Norwegian hosts, coming to the aid of the Scots, cp. v. 27, turned on them, "assisted" by the treachery of the Thane of Cawdor, and began a fresh attack, but were defeated by Macbeth and Banquo. In Holinshed the treachery of Cawdor is briefly mentioned in the words: "shortlie after the Thane of Cawdor being condemned at Fores of treason against the King committed, his lands livings and offices were given of the King's liberalitie to Macbeth," and the invasion of the King of Norway is not connected with Macdowald's rebellion. In Holinshed's account, too, Duncan and Malcolm take an active part in the fighting. We must remember, therefore, that in Scene II we are dealing with Shakspeare's Macbeth and not with Holinshed's, that all this first act is not the 'Historie of Scotland' but the background of a tragedy. The details of those parts of the action in which Macbeth is not directly concerned are thus mere hints and suggestions, intentionally left vague and undefined, and due historic sequences of time and events have but little place in the dramatic interest. What Shakspeare gives us is the picture of a great battle whose central figure is Macbeth twice snatching victory out of the jaws of defeat and disaster: the other figures are merely sketched in, as it were, so that the heroic personality may stand forth in greater clearness and distinction.

The first three sentences of this scene do not sound like Shakspeare, especially the awkward and unnecessary inversion "of the revolt the newest state." Moreover, they introduce the succeeding events as an aspect of a revolt, not as a single battle; they explain to the audience the relations of the actors to the action in a bald and mechanical way quite unlike Shakspeare's, who usually leaves the action to explain itself; they make Malcolm participate in the battle but leave the field for no apparent cause before its crisis has come on and in utter ignorance of the issue of even the first stage of the fight; and they contain a reference to the news-bringer as a wounded "serjeant" that is inconsistent with the scene and stage directions. These inconsistencies give good ground for supposing that Scene II when it left Shakspeare's hands began with Malcolm's words "Haile, brave friend!" These lines are therefore marked off from the rest of the play by an obelus (†), and the "Captaine" of FO. I is not altered to "Sergeant" or "Soldier" in the stage directions, as in modern editions beginning with Capell's, 1767. The "Duncan (Dun.)" of modern editions has also been changed back to the "King" of FO. I. There is only one king in the play, and that is Duncan. Macbeth's kingship is an ill-worn, ill-fitting garment, and we are never allowed by Shakspeare to forget the fact; even Davenant's later version of the play, 1674, recognized the fitness of this stage direction. The theory stated by the editors of the Clarendon Press edition (Cl. Pr.), that the whole scene, together with vv. 1-37 of Scene III, is by another hand than Shakspeare's, is quite untenable.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

SCENE II: A CAMP NEAR FORRES: ALARUM WITHIN  
ENTER KING MALCOLME DONALBAIN LENOX WITH ATTENDANTS  
MEETING A BLEEDING CAPTAINE

I-13

¶ 3 NEWEST often in EL. E. corresponds to MN. E. 'latest,' cp. Malcolm's "what's the newest griefe?" in IV. 3. 174. SERJEANT seems here to be a trisyllable but is a dissyllable elsewhere in Shakspeare. ¶ 4 Malcolm's epithet HARDIE implies 'daring,' as in MN. E. 'foolhardy,' and GOOD is an ordinary 16th century equivalent of 'brave' as in "good men" IV. 3. 3. ¶ 5 The CAPTIVITIE he refers to may have been suggested by Holinshed's "Macdowald [in an earlier stage of the revolt] . . . by mere force tooke their capteine Malcolme [not the king's son, however] and after the end of the battell smote off his head." The printer of FO. 2 noticed the lack of an unstressed syllable after "captivitie" and added another "haile" to make up the rhythm; Walker and Abbott suggested several botchings of the verse into normal regularity; but this is only one of numerous instances in English poetry—there are at least



† KING  
HAT bloody man is that? He can report,  
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt  
The newest state.†

MALCOLME

† This is the serjeant  
Who like a good and hardie souldier fought  
'Gainst my captivitie.† Haile, brave friend!  
Say to the king the knowledge of the  
broyle  
As thou didst leave it.

CAPTAINE

Doubtfull it stood,  
As two spent swimmers that doe cling together  
And choake their art. The mercilesse Mac-  
donwald—  
Worthie to be a rebell, for to that  
The multiplying villanies of nature  
Doe swarme upon him—from the Westernne  
Isles  
Of kernes and gallowglasses is supply'd;

nine in this play—where an unstressed impulse is lost after the verse pause: cp. I. 1. 7, note, and I. 5. 41. ¶ 6 Malcolm's words SAY TO THE KING, etc., are not so stilted as they seem to modern ears, for "say" and "say to" in EL. E. were commonly used of narration, e.g. "say in brieft the cause Why thou departedst" Err. 1. I. 29, and the definite article had a force nearly like that of the modern possessive pronoun, so that THE KNOWLEDGE stands for MN. E. 'your knowledge.' The extra syllable in ¶ 7 may be accounted for by assuming a common EL. contraction by which the pronoun IT is absorbed in the preceding word, like "goes't" IV. 3. 179, "deny't" III. 6. 15. Four-wave verses are not uncommon in Shakspeare's blank verse and are especially frequent in Macbeth. ¶ 8 The captain's simile seems to be taken from a swimming match in which each of the contestants, worn out by his efforts and in despair of winning the goal, seeks to prevent the other from getting the prize. ¶ 9 As the skill of the swimmers is 'obstructed' (cp. N. E. D. 'choke' 10) by their too close proximity, so in this BROYLE, a word suggestive of confused tumult and 'hurly-burly,' the too close quarters of the combatants prevent all exercise



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

of military art. In Holinshed the name of the leader of the rebels is "Macdowald"; MACDONWALD is probably, as Malone suggested, due to a confusion with the "Donwald" spoken of by Holinshed on p. 149. ¶ 10 THAT seems to refer to the rebels' mercilessness, with TO in its common EL. sense of 'besides'; cp. "to that dauntlesse temper of his minde" III.1.52. ¶ 13 OF is used in the sense of 'by'; and SUPPLY'D is the regular EL. E. military term for 'reinforced,' cp. Kersey, 'Dictionary,' 1708, "supply, . . recruits of forces"; cp. also John V.3.9. Spenser, Globe ed., pp. 639 ff., gives us a description of these KERNES AND GALLOWGLASSES (the word is misprinted "gallowgrosses" in FO. 1): "for it [i.e. "the quilted leather jacke"] is then [i.e. "in warre"] worn likewise of a footeman under a shirte of mayle, the which footeman they call a galloglass . . And he being soe armed, in a long shirt of mayle down to the calfe of his legg with a long brode axe in his hand, was then *pedes gravis armaturae*." These gallowglasses and "kearne," light-armed Irish soldiers, are "the most loathsome and barbarous conditions of any people under heaven. They do use all the beastly behavior that may be; they oppress all men; they spoyle as well the subject as the enemy," etc. Eudoxus exclaims, "These be most villenous conditions!" Spenser goes on to describe the "frye [an EL. E. synonym of 'swarm'] of rakehelle horse-boyes" as especially needing reformation: "for out of these . . are theyr kearne continually supplied and maintained." It would seem, therefore, that the MULTIPLYING VILLANIES OF NATURE in v. 11 are the 'kernes and gallowglasses' themselves, and not vicious aspects of Macdonwald's character. ¶ 12 SWARME is not elsewhere by Shakspeare used with reference to abstract qualities, but refers to the gathering of mobs: e.g. "our peasants . . swarme About our squares of battaile" Hen.5 IV. 2. 27, "With the plebians swarming at their heeles" Hen.5 V. chor. 27; "The common people by numbers swarme to us" 3Hen.6 IV. 2.2. MULTIPLYING, too, generally means 'prolific,' not 'multiplied,' and is used here, if this interpretation is the correct one, as in Cor. 11. 2. 82: "Your multiplying spawne how can he flatter!"

## ACT I SCENE II 14-20

And Fortune on his damned quarry smiling  
Shew'd like a rebell's whore. But all 's too  
weake;

For brave Macbeth — well hee deserves that  
name —

Disdayning Fortune, with his brandisht  
steale,

Which smoak'd with bloody execution,  
Like Valour's minion carv'd out his passage  
Till hee fac'd the slave:

¶ 14 QUARRY is usually altered to "quarrel" by modern editors; but there is no good reason for the change, despite Holinshed's "rebellious quarrel" in his description of Macdowald's rebellion. That quarrel, 'crossbow bolt,' is occasionally spelled 'quarry' in EL. E. (cp. Cl. Pr., p. 77), and that quarrel, 'small square window pane,' is often similarly

spelled, is not surprising: for both these words had in EL. E. doublet forms in -y. But quarrel, MN. E. 'quarrel,' had not. QUARRY in the sense of 'heaps of slain' is also found in Cor. I. 1. 202, "I'de make a quarrie With thousands of these quarter'd slaves": properly the word describes a heap of slaughtered game, and the association is not so entirely inapposite here as to lead to the inference that it is a misprint for "quarrel." A somewhat similar expression is found in Drayton's Barrons Warres, 1605, II. 57: "O ill did Fate these noble armes bestow Which as a quarry on the soilde earth lay, Seized on by conquest as a glorious pray." DAMN in the sense of 'to doom,' 'ruin,' 'destroy' without the connotation 'doom to everlasting perdition' is sufficiently common in EL. E. to make no difficulty; cp. Oth. 1. 3. 359, Iago to Roderigo, "If thou wilt needs

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

damne thy selfe, do it a more delicate [*i. e.* pleasant] way then drowning." ¶15 SHEW'D (*i. e.* 'appeared,' 'looked,' cp. I. 3. 54) in the preterite tense is awkward with the IS preceding it. But in M.E. and EL.E. the historical present and past tenses are frequently used together in the same narrative. Here, too, SHEW'D seems to point to the first stage of the battle, now past. ALL'S TOO WEAKE presents a similar inconsequence of tenses if ALL'S is to be taken for 'All is.' It may possibly, however, be the contracted form of 'All was,' like "There's" for 'There was' in II. 2. 23. Such forms were not uncommon in EL.E., cp. Jonson, 'Sejanus,' 1640, p. 338, "*Agr.* Dying? *Ner.* That's strange! *Agr.* Yo' were with him yesternight," where no contraction is possible but 'you're.' ¶18 SMOAK'D is here used in its well-nigh obsolete sense of 'steamed' (though we still say "smoking hot"); cp. "Thy murd'rous faulchion smoaking in his blood" Rich.3 I. 2. 94. EXECUTION: in EL.E. the suffixes *-sion*, *-tion*, *-tience* can be either dissyllabic as in M.E. or monosyllabic as in MN.E. The word refers to the wielding of any weapon or instrument; cp. "In fellest manner execute [*i. e.* 'wield,' N.E.D. 'execute' I b] your armes" Tro.&Cr. V. 7. 6, where to make MN.E. sense many editors change "armes" to the weak "aims"! ¶20 In TILL HE FAC'D THE SLAVE we seem to have a verse beginning with a doubled unstressed impulse; such verses are not common in Macbeth; there is one in I. 2. 46, and another in III. 4. 133. Lines of less than the five normal waves occur frequently in EL. blank verse, and this one is well adapted to a wounded soldier's narrative. But perhaps LIKE VALOUR'S MINION (three syllables), v. I9, was an after insertion which broke in two a verse originally beginning with CARV'D and ending with SLAVE.

## ACT I SCENE II 21-24

Which nev'r shooke hands nor bad farwell to him  
Till he unseam'd him from the navel to th' chops  
And fix'd his head upon our battlements.

KING

O valiant cousin! worthy gentleman!

¶21 WHICH refers to Macbeth, being an instance of the common EL. usage of the relative pronoun as a connective, 'and he'; cp. I. 5. 37, and III. 1. 85 where "which" stands for 'and this.' SHOOKE HANDS seems to refer to the formal preliminaries of a fight, as in Sidney's *Arcadia*, 1590, p. 267: "After the terrible salutation of warlike noyse, the shaking of handes was with sharpe weapons," with NOR in its common sense of 'and not.' "Shook hands" in the sense of 'took leave of' is usually found in EL.E. in connection with abstract notions, *e. g.* "shake hands with chastitie" *Euphues*, Arber, p. 75 (quoted in Cl. Pr.), "with folly" Middleton's *Witch* (quoted by Manly), "with earth," *i. e.* with earthly things, Quarles, 'Emblems' (quoted by Cent. Dict.), "with virtue" Cooper, 'Thesaurus' *s.v.* *nuntius*. ¶22 NAVE, 'navel,' seems to be the right word here, though this anomalous form has not yet been found in EL.E. That the two words "navel," M.E. "navele," and "nave," M.E. "nave," 'the centre of a wheel,' were confused in EL.E. is shown by Massinger's use of "navel" for "nave" in "Circle him round with death and if he stir His body be the navel to the wheel In which your rapiers like so many spokes Shall meet and fix themselves" 'Parl. of Love' II. 3 (Cent. Dict.). That the expression was more or less familiar to EL. ears is shown by Nash's, 1594, "Then from the navel to the throat at once He ript old Priam" (quoted from Steevens's note). In Holinshed Macbeth finds Macdowald already dead on taking his castle. CHOPS, an EL. form of MN.E. "chaps," 'jaws,' was used of persons as well as of animals in Shakspeare's time. ¶24 As to Macbeth's cousinship with Duncan, cp. Hol., p. 168: "After Malcolme succeeded his nephue Duncane [the Duncan of the play] the sonne of his daughter Beatrice: for Malcome had two daughters, the one, which was this Beatrice, being given in mariage unto one Abbanath Crinen . . . bare of that mariage .



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

ACT I

SCENE II

25—35

CAPTAINE

As whence the sunne 'gins his reflection  
Shipwracking stormes and direfull thunders,  
So from that spring whence comfort seem'd  
to come

Discomfort swells. Marke, King of Scotland, marke:

No sooner justice had, with valour arm'd,  
Compell'd these skipping kernes to trust  
their heeles,

But the Norweyan lord, surveying vantage,  
With furbusht armes and new supplyes of men  
Began a fresh assault.

KING

Dismay'd not this  
Our capitaines, Macbeth and Banquoh?

CAPTAINE

Yes—

As sparrowes eagles, or the hare the lyon.

the foresaid Duncane. The other called Doad, was married unto Sinell [cp. 1. 3. 71] the thane of Glamis, by whom she had issue one Macbeth, a valiant gentleman."

The figure in ¶ 25 ff. is a reference to storms rising out of the east and not to the storms of the vernal equinox, a curious interpretation tortured out of the Latin meaning of *re- and flectio*, 'turning back.' REFLECTION in EL. E. is used of direct shining, cp. "May never glorious sunne reflex his beames Upon the countrey where you make abode" 1 Hen. 6 V. 4. 87; "Most radiant and refulgent Lampe of light . . from thee Reflect [i. e. shine] those rayes that have enlightned mee" Quarles, 'Sion's Sonets,' 1630, V. The same metaphor is found in 2 Hen. 4 IV. 4. 34, 35, "As humorous as winter and as sudden As flaws congealed in the spring of day," which also shows the EL. use of SPRING, v. 27, in

the sense of 'sunrise': in the 'dayspring from on high' of Luke 1. 78 this meaning is still preserved. That Shakspeare intends us to think of Sweno as coming to the aid of the Scots and then turning on them is evident from the WHENCE COMFORT SEEM'D TO COME, i. e. whence help was to have come, for SEEM in EL. E. often connotes an immediate or near futurity, 'was on the point of,' as here and in v. 47 below. ¶ 26 After THUNDERS modern editors, following Pope, supply 'break'; but 'storms break' and 'thunders break' are neither of them Shaksperian locutions. The word which Shakspeare generally uses in connection with thunder is "bursts," cp. Lear III. 2. 46, "such bursts of horrid thunder," and this would also aptly describe the coming of a sudden flaw. The verse, however, does not really need a patch either to make sense, for with ideas of motion the verb is often omitted in M. E. and EL. E. where it can be supplied from the context, or to make metre, for four-wave verses are common in Macbeth: in III. 1. 103 and I. 4. 14 are two instances; in the latter the verse ends with a falling impulse as here. ¶ 27 COMFORT, still used in the sense of 'aid,' 'support' in our phrase 'give comfort to the enemy,' was common in EL. E. with this signification: cp. IV. 3. 193; ¶ 28 DISCOMFORT, likewise, connoted the negative of this idea and corresponds to MN. E. 'undoing,' 'disaster': cp. "Should I stay longer, It would be my disgrace and your discomfort" IV. 2. 29. ¶ 29 NO SOONER—BUT is EL. E. idiom for 'no sooner—than,' cp. N. E. D. 'but' 16; but in MN. E. the verb usually precedes the subject; the same word order occurs in I. 2. 63, "No more that Thane of Cawdor shall deceive," etc. ¶ 31 SURVEYING VANTAGE seems to mean 'seeing his opportunity,' cp. N. E. D. 'advantage' 4 and Cym. 1. 3. 24; but SURVEY in the sense 'discern' is not elsewhere found in EL. E. In Rich. 3 V. 3. 15, "Let us survey the vantage of

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

the field," "vantage" refers to opportunity of place rather than to opportunity of time, and "survey" has its usual sense of 'view.' ¶ 33 There are two forms of the word captain in EL. E. as in M. E., one "captain" and the other CAPITAINE; both forms continue to be written through the 17th century, and the latter, the trisyllabic, is of constant occurrence in books of Shakspeare's time, e. g. Halle's Chronicle, Henry VIII, 292 b, Cooper's Thesaurus, etc.; cp., too, Marston as quoted in Warton-Hazlitt IV, p. 417, "with farewell, capitaine, kind heart, adew!" There can be but little doubt that here and in 3Hen.6IV.7.30 Shakspeare used the CAPITAINE form, though the printer of the Folio has set the dissyllabic word.

¶ 37 CRACKS seems here to mean 'shots,' but this passage is as yet the only evidence that has been cited for such a meaning in EL. E.: its usual sense is 'crash.' This double charging of pieces is jokingly referred to by Falstaff when he hears the good news of Prince Hal's accession: "Pistol," he says, "I will double charge thee with dignities" 2Hen.4V.3.130. ¶ 38 SO THEY, which makes the verse one of six waves with the cæsure after THEY, is here printed as in FO. I; some editors append it to v. 37, others make a separate line of it. But such expedients help little. There are many six-wave verses in Shakspeare and the EL. poets; whether they were due to carelessness or were a permissible variation of the blank-verse structure has not yet been made out. Such expressions as DOUBLY REDOUBLED—this one occurs in Rich.2 I.3.80—are frequent in EL. E., but now give offence by their tautology. ¶ 39 The captain's knowledge of the battle seems to end at this point: but his closing words are not so abruptly broken off as they seem to be in MN. E., for I CANNOT TELL is 16th century idiom for 'I do not know what to say,' cp. Spenser's Faerie Queene I.8.34, and would be so understood by an EL. audience. EXCEPT is used in its EL. sense of 'unless,' cp. N. E. D., and MEMORIZE is 'make memorable,' cp. Hen.8 III.2.52. We have precisely the same sort of sentence in Tam. of Shr. IV.4.91: "I cannot tell, except they are busied about a counterfeit assurance," where the punctuation of FO. I—and it is the only authority for the passage—shows that its "expect" is a misprint for "except," noticed and corrected by FO.2, though modern editions strangely return to "expect." This sentence is therefore printed here as it stands in FO. I, without the dash after "tell." ¶ 43 SO—AS is a regular M. E. and EL. E. idiom corresponding to MN. E. 'as—as.' The stage direction of the Folio, ENTER ROSSE AND ANGUS, which follows the captain's exit, is altered to "Enter Ross" by modern editors and placed after WHO COMES HERE? But Rosse and Angus in I.3.88 together bring news of Macbeth's promotion. That Angus does not speak is no evidence for his not

## ACT I SCENE II 36—45

If I say sooth, I must report they were  
As cannons over-charg'd with double cracks,  
So they doubly redoubled stroakes upon the  
foe:

Except they meant to bathe in reeking  
wounds,

Or memorize another Golgotha,  
I cannot tell.

But I am faint; my gashes cry for helpe.

KING

So well thy words become thee as thy wounds;  
They smack of honor both. Goe get him  
surgeons.

EXIT CAPITAINE ATTENDED  
ENTER ROSSE AND ANGUS

Who comes here?

MALCOLME

The worthy Thane of Rosse!

are many six-wave verses in Shakspeare and the EL. poets; whether they were due to carelessness or were a permissible variation of the blank-verse structure has not yet been made out. Such expressions as DOUBLY REDOUBLED—this one occurs in Rich.2 I.3.80—are frequent in EL. E., but now give offence by their tautology. ¶ 39 The captain's knowledge of the battle seems to end at this point: but his closing words are not so abruptly broken off as they seem to be in MN. E., for I CANNOT TELL is 16th century idiom for 'I do not know what to say,' cp. Spenser's Faerie Queene I.8.34, and would be so understood by an EL. audience. EXCEPT is used in its EL. sense of 'unless,' cp. N. E. D., and MEMORIZE is 'make memorable,' cp. Hen.8 III.2.52. We have precisely the same sort of sentence in Tam. of Shr. IV.4.91: "I cannot tell, except they are busied about a counterfeit assurance," where the punctuation of FO. I—and it is the only authority for the passage—shows that its "expect" is a misprint for "except," noticed and corrected by FO.2, though modern editions strangely return to "expect." This sentence is therefore printed here as it stands in FO. I, without the dash after "tell." ¶ 43 SO—AS is a regular M. E. and EL. E. idiom corresponding to MN. E. 'as—as.' The stage direction of the Folio, ENTER ROSSE AND ANGUS, which follows the captain's exit, is altered to "Enter Ross" by modern editors and placed after WHO COMES HERE? But Rosse and Angus in I.3.88 together bring news of Macbeth's promotion. That Angus does not speak is no evidence for his not

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

being in the scene: Donalbaine (see scene direction) does not speak at all, and Lenox only once. It is likely, therefore, that Shakspeare intended them both to enter here as the Folio records, Rosse somewhat in advance and alone taking part in the dialogue. In EL. stage directions "Enter" means 'begins to take part in the action' and not necessarily in the dialogue. There is, therefore, no occasion for changing either the form or the position of the stage direction. ¶ 45 Malcolm's words seem to be rather an exclamation than an answer to Duncan's question; the Folio has a period after Rosse, but its printer rarely uses the exclamation-point, e.g. GOD SAVE THE KING, v. 47, is followed by a period. EL. E. WORTHY has part of the connotation of MN. E. 'brave,' 'valiant,' as it had in M. E.

## ACT I SCENE II 46-53

LENOX

What a haste lookes through his eyes! So  
should he looke

That seemes to speake things strange.

ROSSE

God save the king!

KING

Whence cam'st thou, worthy thane?

ROSSE

From Fiffe, great king,

Where the Norweyan banners flowt the  
skie,

And fanne our people cold.

Norway himselve, with terrible numbers,

Assisted by that most disloyall traytor

The Thane of Cawdor, began a dismall  
conflict,

¶ 46 Either WHAT A HASTE or "what haste" is idiomatic EL. E.; but two unstressed syllables at the beginning of a verse are of comparatively rare occurrence; and it was probably for this reason that the editor of FO. 2 dropped out the article. ¶ 47 SEEMES is here used, like "seem'd" in v. 27 above and "seeme" in I. 5. 30 below, to denote something immediately imminent, and corresponds to MN. E. 'is going to,' 'is about to,' 'is on the point of.' Sidney, 'Arcadia,' p. 291, uses much the same words as those Shakspeare puts into the mouth of Lenox:

"the messenger came in with letters in his hand and hast in his countenance"; cp. also, "And that [i.e. if] our drift [i.e. intention] looke through our bad performance" Ham. IV. 7. 152, and "The businesse of this man lookes out of him" Ant. & Cl. V. 1. 50 (cited by Cl. Pr.). ¶ 48 In M. E. and early New English (e. N. E.) the imperfect tense often expresses action which in MN. E. is represented by the perfect, as CAM'ST, here; the illustrations given by Koch, 'Engl. Gram.,' p. 40, could be greatly multiplied, reaching back to Chaucer and forward through the 17th century. ¶ 49 To an Englishman of Shakspeare's time the mere unfurling of foreign banners on English soil was an insult to heaven: in John V. 1. 69 ff., speaking of "arms invasive," the Bastard says, "Shall a beardlesse boy . . . flesh his spirit [i.e. courage] in a warre-like soyle, Mocking the ayre with colours idly [i.e. foolishly, rashly] spread?" An alliance of a foreign power with discontented elements in Ireland and Scotland was much more than a dramatic situation to Shakspeare's audience, and the blood of more than one of them had already run "cold" at the thought of it. Rosse, of course, represents the appalling situation in present time, just as does the wounded captain in v. 13. ¶ 50 For FANNE OUR PEOPLE COLD cp. "Let . . . your enemies with nodding of their plumes fan you into despaire" Cor. III. 3. 126. ¶ 51 TERRIBLE belongs to a large class of EL. words in which an unstressed syllable—usually one containing a liquid or nasal—preceded by a full stressed syllable and followed by one of secondary stress, was lost, and the following



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

secondarily stressed syllable reduced to an unstressed syllable. These words occur in the best literary idiom of the EL. period; many printers indicate the loss of this syllable both in prose and poetry by an apostrophe, showing that it was not mere poetic license. Some of these syncopated words are still heard, like "med'cine," "parlous," ('perilous,' with the further change of e to a), "nat'ral," but are recognized as vulgar; others, like "fev'rish" and "tott'ring," are in constant unquestioned use; while innumerable others, like "visited" and "enemy," have entirely lost their syncopated forms. ¶ 52 ASSISTED does not mean necessarily that the Thane of Cawdor stood fighting by the side of the King of Norway: he merely furthers the designs of the invaders, as the Host "assists" Fenton "in his purpose" in Merry W. IV. 6. 3; the details are left to the imagination. The only interest that the fact has for the tragedy of Macbeth lies in the confirmation which it gives to the first part of the witches' prophecy, and Shakspeare would have been the less Shakspeare had he stopped to describe the treachery to the satisfaction of the historical student. ¶ 53 In the DISMALL CONFLICT, as in the "dismall fight" which the messenger describes to the Bishop of Winchester in I Hen. 6 I. 1. 105, "dismal" is used in its obsolete sense of 'disastrous.' The word was originally a phrase meaning 'an unlucky day,' and in Shakspeare's time still retained a part of this M.E. connotation of misfortune.

¶ 54 THAT is a strengthening particle with M.E. and EL.E. conjunctive adverbs like "till," "when," "if," etc., still familiar to us in Bible English. Rosse calls Macbeth BELLONA'S BRIDE-GROOME, as the wounded soldier describes him as "Valour's darling," picturing him as one who had newly taken the goddess of war for his bride. The classical inconsistency of making Bellona, the maid of war, even momentarily a bride—that Shakspeare did not do it out of ignorance is fortunately evident from I Hen. 4 IV. 1. 112 ff.—has not escaped the criticism of Shakspeare scholars, who offer various mitigating explanations. LAPT IN PROOFE carries out the picture of this new god of war, another "mailed Mars" (cp. I Hen. 4 IV. 1. 116) with his "armours forg'd for prooffe eterne" (cp. Ham. II. 2. 512). ¶ 55 In Shakspeare's time COMPARISON had the connotation of 'rivalry,' a shade of meaning which is

## ACT I SCENE II 54-67

Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapt in prooffe,  
Confronted him with selfe-comparisons,  
Point against point, rebellious arme 'gainst  
arme

Curbing his lavish spirit; and, to conclude,  
The victorie fell on us,—

KING

Great happinesse!—

ROSSE

that now Sweno,

The Norways king, craves composition;  
Nor would we deigne him buriall of his men  
Till he disbursed at Saint Colmes ynch  
Ten thousand dollars to our generall use.

KING

No more that Thane of Cawdor shall deceive  
Our bosome interest: goe pronounce his  
present death,  
And with his former title greet Macbeth.

ROSSE

I'le see it done.

KING

What he hath lost, noble Macbeth hath  
wonne.

EXEUNT

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

prominent here, and SELFE in EL.E. was frequently used as the first element of a compound word whose connotation was a property of the subject of the thought; cp. "selfe-bounty" Oth. III. 3. 200, "selfe-danger" Cym. III. 4. 149, and Jonson's "thou art not covetous of least selfe-fame" 'Epigrammes' II, ed. 1640. ¶ 56 That POINT is a metonymy for 'sword' is evident from "Turne face to face 'and bloody point to point" John II. I. 390, and "How often he had met you sword to sword" Cor. III. I. 13. The text follows the punctuation of the Folio, which makes good sense, and the comma is not put after REBELLIOUS as in many modern editions. (FO. I has a comma also after ARME, which has been removed, for in FO. I a descriptive participial clause, as is usual in EL. printing, is almost invariably pointed off from its noun: e.g. "And the late dignities, Heap'd up to them" I. 6. 19, and "we shall have cause of state, Craving us jointly" III. I. 34, and "His silver skinne, lac'd with his golden blood" II. 3. 118.) As HIS is the EL.E. equivalent of MN.E. 'its,' and SPIRIT a psychological term for the physical energy supposed to reside in the members of the body, HIS probably refers to REBELLIOUS ARME; i. e. 'the arm of the King of Norway, now fighting for the rebels, against the arm of Macbeth, curbing its unbridled strength.' ¶ 57 LAVISH in MN.E. is usually limited to unrestrained expenditure or prodigal giving; in EL. E. it had a far more general application, e.g. "his lavish tongue" I Hen. 6 II. 5. 47, "lavish manners" 2 Hen. 4 IV. 4. 64. ¶ 58 GREAT HAPPINESSE means 'what good fortune!' cp. Oth. III. 4. 108, where Cassius's meeting with Desdemona provokes Iago to exclaim, "Loe, the happinesse!" The line is interjectory and the interrupted verse is continued in THAT NOW, etc. THAT in EL.E. often expresses result, 'so that,' as here. ¶ 59 NORWAYES is EL.E. for 'Norwegians' and not a mistake for 'Norway'; cp. "English, Scots, Danes, Norwayes, they Foure mighty people" Slatyer, 'Palæalbion,' 1619, p. 219. COMPOSITION means 'terms of surrender,' cp. "Thus we are agreed; I crave our composition may be written And seal'd betweene us," Ant. & Cl. II. 6. 58; the word has five syllables, cp. v. 18. ¶ 61 SAINT COLMES YNCH ("inch" is a Gaelic word for a small island) is now Inchcolm in the Firth of Forth opposite Leith. ¶ 62 Minsheu, 1617, says the DOLLAR was a "Dutch coine worth about foure shillings." Shakspeare may have had in mind, however, the "rigs dollar" of the northern countries, which the visit of Christian IV to the court of King James in 1606 had recently made familiar to Londoners. TO OUR GENERALL USE is EL.E. for 'to defray our state expenses,' cp. "Whose ransomes did the generall coffers fill" Cæs. III. 2. 94, and "Hath here distrayn'd the tower to his use" I Hen. 6 I. 3. 61. ¶ 64 In EL.E. BOSOME was used as an adjective meaning 'close,' 'intimate,' and hints at an intimate relation between the treacherous thane and Duncan (OUR, of course, is the majesty plural). PRESENT DEATH is 'immediate death,' cp. "Martius is worthy of present death" Cor. III. I. 211. The scene closes with a couplet, a common practice with Elizabethan dramatists.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SCENE III

Scene III resumes the falling lyric rhythm of Scene I; now running lightly along with no secondarily stressed syllables, now swirling back on itself in short intervals of rising rhythm, as in vv. 11, 12, 13, 17, and 18, now poised for a moment, as in "Looke what I have," v. 26, then madly rushing on again to be caught back in vv. 30 and 31. Then the final rush of the chorus, "about, about," ending with the three verses whose rhythm is "Peáce! the chárme's woúnd úp," a wonderfully fitting cadence to the series. The witchery of such rhythm is paralleled only by that of Puck's charm in *Midsummer Night's Dream* III. 2. 148 ff. And yet, with the strange obliquity of judgement which sometimes besets Shakspeare scholarship, these verses have been thought unShaksperian.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

SCENE III: A HEATH: THUNDER: ENTER THE THREE WITCHES

I-10

FIRST WITCH

¶ 1 Jonson, in a note to his 'Masque of Queens,' 1609, tells us: "This is also solenne [*i. e.* part of the ritual] in their witchcraft, to be examined, either by the Divill, or their Dame, at their meetings, of what mischief they have done and what they can confer ['contribute'] to a future hurt," subjoining references to the classical literature of demonology. Shakspeare makes his witches interrogate one another, omitting the dame features altogether (see note on III. 5. 2). Jonson makes them "sisters," but Shakspeare always keeps in the background their norn character: to him they are the "weyward sisters," the Three Sisters of



HERE hast thou beene, sister?

SECOND WITCH. Killing swine.

THIRD WITCH. Sister, where thou?

FIRST WITCH

A saylor's wife had chestnuts in her lappe,  
And mouncht and mouncht and mouncht:

'Give me,' quoth I.

'Aroynt thee, witch!' the rumpe-fed ronyon  
cryes.

Her husband's to Aleppo gone,  
Master o' th' Tiger;  
But in a syve I 'le thither sayle,  
And, like a rat without a taylor,  
I 'le doe, I 'le doe, and I 'le doe.

Destiny. ¶ 2 Gifford in his Dialogue concerning Witches, 1603, tells us that their powers are "when they are offended with any . . . to hurt them in their bodies, yea, to kill them, and to kill their cattell." ¶ 5 The form MOUNCH, 'to chew with closed lips,' is not uncommon in EL. E., cp. "Mounch-present," Awdley, 'The XXV orders of Knaves,' E. E. T. S., p. 14. GIVE ME is EL. E. for 'give it to me': Juliet asks the Friar for the vial with "Give me, give me, O tell me not of feare" in Rom. & Jul. IV. I. 121. ¶ 6 AROYNT THEE is evidently an adjuration to a witch, meaning 'begone'; the word is used also in the same sense in Lear III. 4. 129, "aroynt thee, witch, aroynt thee!" But the locution has not yet been found elsewhere in EL. E., cp. N. E. D. s. v. RUMPE-FED seems to be the equivalent of Cotgrave's "*hanchu*, bumme-growne, great hipt"; with FED in its EL. sense of 'fatted': "fed calfe" in Coverdale's version corresponds to the "fatted calf" of Luke XV. 27, cp. N. E. D. 'fed' b. It may, however, mean 'fed on rumps,' cp. "beane fed" Mids. II. I. 45, and "Had he [*i. e.* my father] set me to grammer schole . . . instead of treading coronatoes and making fidlers fat with rumps of capon I had by this time read homilyes" Dekker, 'Knights Conjuring,' Percy Soc., p. 31. The abusive RONYON originally meant 'scurvy person.' In Merry W. IV. 2. 193, Ford, who takes the disguised Falstaff for a witch, cries "Out of my doore you witch . . . you poulcatt, you runnion." ¶ 7 HER . . . GONE, MASTER . . . TIGER seem to be intended for two verses, though printed as one in the Folio. In O' TH' appears a common EL. contraction for 'of the' that counts as but one verse impulse; the definite article is enclitic, as is shown by the EL. printing "ithe," a similar contraction for 'in the,' and "tothe," a similar contraction for 'to the.' These contract forms are not peculiar to poetry as in MN. E., but are found in EL. prose as well. Collier cites an account of a voyage to ALEPPO in a ship called the TIGER of London in 1583 as given by Hakluyt II, pp. 247, 251, which seems to be more than a mere coincidence, though *Tiger* is a common ship-name in the 16th and 17th

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

centuries. ¶8 That witches went to sea in sieves was a popular belief in the 16th century. The form "sive," "syve," is common in EL.E.; it is our modern spelling that is anomalous. ¶9 Steevens, 1793, states that it was a belief of the times that though a witch could assume the form of any animal she pleased, the tail would be wanting; but unfortunately he gives no evidence of this popular superstition. ¶10 DOE seems to be

## ACT I SCENE III 11-26

### SECOND WITCH

I 'le give thee a winde.

### FIRST WITCH

Th' art kinde.

### THIRD WITCH

And I another.

### FIRST WITCH

I my selfe have all the other,  
And the very ports they blow—  
All the quarters that they know  
I' th' ship-man's card.  
I 'le dreyne him drie as hay,  
Sleepe shall neyther night nor day  
Hang upon his pent-house lid;  
He shall live a man forbid:  
Wearie sev'nights nine times nine  
Shall he dwindle, peake, and pine;  
Though his barke cannot be lost  
Yet it shall be tempest tost.  
Looke what I have.

used vaguely here for 'work mischief,' like the MN.E. "I'll do him!" The thrice repeated threat has a peculiar solemnity, imitating the *fiat, fiat, fiat* of an excommunication writ.

¶11 Her witch sisters promise her winds, which they were popularly supposed to control, cp. "The witches raise tempests," etc., Gifford, 'Dial.' p. 74. Burton in his 'Anat. of Mel.' says that "nothing is so familiar as for witches and sorcerers in Scandinavia to sell winds to mariners and cause tempests." WINDE in EL.E. rhymed with KINDE. ¶14 OTHER is the EL. plural, and that BLOW is used in the sense of 'blow upon' seems evident from "Ayre, quoth he, thy cheekes may blowe" L.L.L. IV. 3. 109, though this sense is not given in N.E.D. save in the phrases "to blow one's nails or fingers" and "blow the fire." Many changes have been proposed to avoid the seeming unintelligibility of the verse when it is read as MN.E. Shakspeare may have

had in mind the proverb quoted by Cotgrave *s.v. vent*, "No one can blow him to good whom destinie will not harbour." ¶17 For I' TH', cp. v. 7. THE SHIP-MAN'S CARD is the mariner's compass, cp. "Not now to learne his compasse by the carde" Drayton, 'Barrons Warres,' III. 15. 6. Chaucer's "shipman" for 'sailor' was still in common use in EL.E.: Cooper defines *nauta* as "a shipman, a mariner," and Shakspeare speaks of "shipmen" in Tro. & Cr. V. 2. 172. ¶18 The witch's threat I' LE DREYNE—the word means 'dry up' in EL.E.—HIM DRIE AS HAY has reference to EL. psychology; cp. Burton, 'Anat. of Mel.,' III. 4. 2. 4, "Fear takes away their content, and dries the blood, wasteth the marrow": this explains also vv. 22, 23. Shakspeare in Sonnet LXIII refers to the same notion in "With Time's injurious hand crusht and oreworne, When houres [MN.E. 'hours of anxiety'] as in Tim. III. 1. 66] have dreind his blood." ¶20 The figure by which Shakspeare expresses the sleepless anxiety of the witch's victim is taken, not from what we know as a PENT-HOUSE (pronounced "pentine" in EL.E.), which would describe rather the eyebrow than the eyelid, but from the EL. usage of the word in the sense of 'curtain'; cp. Cotgrave, "*hauvens*, penthouses of cloth hung before shop win-

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

dows," and L.L.L. III. I. 17. Shakspeare is fond of the figure: cp. "The fringed curtaines of thine eye advance" Temp. I. 2. 408, and "would under peepe her lids To see th' enclosed lights now canopied Under these windowes" Cym. II. 2. 21. Puck's charm in Mids. II. 2. 80 is "When thou wak'st let love forbid Sleepe his seate on thy eye-lid." ¶ 21 FORBID here seems to mean 'cursed,' 'banned,' though this and a passage probably written in imitation of Shakspeare's use of the word here are the only instances given in N.E.D. for FORBID in this sense. It may be the English equivalent of *homo interdictus*, with another suggestion of excommunication. ¶ 22 The SEV'NIGHT ('sennit'), seven days or half a fortnight, was a common EL. measure of time that has now become poetic. ¶ 23 Many have thought the sailor's dwindling away is a reference to the making of wax figures by witches, who by their charms caused their victims to waste as the wax melted. But the anxiety of a sea captain storm tossed and kept from haven for a year and a half is surely sufficient cause for his dwindling away; see note on "dreyne" above. PEAKE is used by Shakspeare, but in a slightly different sense, in "peake Like John-a-dreames" Ham. II. 2. 594; Kersey, 1708, gives "peaking, that is of sickly constitution"; so 'Glossographia,' 1707; and Sewell's Dutch Dictionary glosses "peaking, *ziekelyk, quynende*"; "peaked," 'sickly,' is still common in English dialects and often heard in the United States. ¶ 24 THOUGH HIS BARKE CANNOT BE LOST seems to be one of those limitations which often conditioned the mischief of witches; but possibly a hint at the fate character of the Three Sisters of Destiny is meant.

¶ 32 The WEYWARD SISTERS are part of the Macbeth legend. Shakspeare undoubtedly derived his knowledge of them from Holinshed, who says that "these women were

either the weird sisters, that is (as ye would say) the goddesses of destinie, or else some nymphs or feiries indued with knowledge of prophesie by their necromantical science." The word "weird" is a 16th century Northern English form of M.E. "werd," meaning 'fate,' 'destiny.' Douglas uses "werd sisters" to render *Parcae* in *Æn.* III. 379, ed. Small, II, p. 142, v. 24. For the place of these fate sisters in Germanic mythology see J. Grimm, 'Deutsche Mythologie,' I, p. 379 ff. It is not strange that in the EL. imagination these beings should be confused with witches: Slatyer's *Palæalbion*, 1619, refers to them as witches; Simon Forman, who saw Macbeth played in 1610, calls them "3 women feiries or nimphes," i. e. witches and enchantresses—Saxo Grammaticus calls the *norns nymphæ*; Skinner, 'Etymologicon,' explaining "weirdes," says the term *etiam sagas seu pythonissas notat*"; Coles, 1713, glosses "wieres" (misprint for "wierdes"?) "witches, destinies." ¶ 33 POSTERS is EL. E. for 'couriers,' cp. Cotgrave, "*courrier*, a post, or, a poster." The significance of the number three in demonology is so common as

## ACT I SCENE III 27-37

### SECOND WITCH

Shew me! shew me!

### FIRST WITCH

Here I have a pilot's thumbe,  
Wrackt as homeward he did come.

DRUM WITHIN

### THIRD WITCH

A drumme, a drumme!  
Macbeth doth come.

### ALL

The weyward sisters, hand in hand,  
Posters of the sea and land,  
Thus doe goe, about, about:  
Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,  
And thrice againe to make up nine—  
Peace! the charme's wound up.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

scarcely to be worth remark. This witches' dance Jonson probably had in mind when he wrote his dance song in the 'Masque of Queenes,' 1609: but the cadence rhythm of the finale in Shakspeare's lyric "Peace! the charme's wound up!" is quite lacking in Jonson's "And our charmes advance."

"About, about, and about,  
Till the mist arise, and the lights flie out,  
The images neither be seene, nor felt;  
The wollen burne, and the waxen melt;  
Sprinkle your liquors upon the ground,  
And into the ayre; around, around,  
    Around, around,  
    Around, around,  
Till a musique sound,  
And the pase be found,  
To which we may dance,  
And our charmes advance."

Whether the form WEYWARD, WEYARD be a phonetic Southern English rendering of the Northern "weird," or due to a confusion with "wayward" ('morose,' 'grim,' 'perverse' in EL. E.), WAYWARD SISTERS, and not "weird sisters," was the phrase by which these creatures were known in England during the 17th century: e. g. Th. Heywood, 'The Late Witches of Lancashire,' 1633, "you look like one of the Scottish wayward sisters" (quoted from Hudson's note in Furness's Variorum); Sewell, Dutch Dict., glosses "the wayward sisters, *de Hexen, Köllen*." It can scarcely be, therefore, a mere misprint for "weird," as Theobald and modern editors suppose. Such a term as WAYWARD SISTERS, 'the gloomy sisters,' 'the grim sisters,' presents a not uncommon association of ideas, cp. *fata perversa* and Old Norse *grimmar* as applied to the norns. In view of these facts and Shakspeare's use of the word as a dissyllable, the Folio spelling WEYWARD and WEYARD is retained. From Shakspeare's spelling "Seyward" and "Seyton" below, "weyward," "weyard" would indicate a word sounded as if spelled in MN. E. "way-ard."

## ACT I                      SCENE III                      38-43

ENTER MACBETH AND BANQUO

MACBETH

So foule and faire a day I have not seene.

BANQUO

How farre is 't call'd to Foris? What are these,

So wither'd and so wilde in their attyre,  
That looke not like th' inhabitants o' th' earth

And yet are on 't? Live you, or are you aught

That man may question? You seeme to understand me

In ¶ 38 Macbeth refers to the fair issue of the battle and the foul weather. Holinshed, ed. Boswell-Stone, p. 21, tells us "the Scots after this victory caused . . . thanks to be given to almightie God, that had sent them so faire a day over their enemies." ¶ 39 The Folio misprints "Soris" for FORIS, an EL. form of modern "Forres" (dissyllabic). The place is on the Moray Firth, ten miles W. S. W. of Elgin, and more than a hundred miles from Kingcorne and Inchcolm, near which the battle



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

took place. Holinshed introduces the incident of Macbeth's meeting the witches as occurring "shortly after" the battle: Shakspeare seems to consider it as happening immediately after. WHAT is the M.E. and EL.E. interrogative relative corresponding to the Latin *qualis*, 'what sort of persons,' cp. "what were these" Temp. III. 3. 20. ¶ 40 WILDE means 'strange,' 'fantastic': Holinshed mentions their "strange and wild apparell." ¶ 43 The word QUESTION had a wider range of meaning in EL. E. than it has now, and meant 'converse with,' 'talk to'; hence the YOU SEEME TO UNDERSTAND ME that follows. The verse is a good illustration of the extra rhythmical syllable before the cæsural pause.

¶ 44 Their CHOPPIE FINGERS were 'fissured with wrinkles'; cp. "Her cheeks with chops and wrincles were disguiz'd" Lucr. 1452. ¶ 45 YOU SHOULD BE is 'one would expect you to be,' with SHOULD in the M.E. sense of the auxiliary. ¶ 46 BEARDS were supposed to be characteristic of witches: Evans in Merry W. IV. 2. 202, says "By yea and no, I thinke the 'oman is a witch indeede: I like not when a 'oman has a great peard; I spie a great peard under his muffler." INTERPRETE is somewhat loosely used in EL. E. in the sense of 'rendering into specific terms'; cp. III. 6. 1, "My former speeches have but hit your thoughts, Which can interpret farther," i. e. 'you can put them in words for yourself.'

ACT I SCENE III 44-61

By each at once her choppie finger laying  
Upon her skinnie lips. You should be  
women,  
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret  
That you are so.

MACBETH

Speake, if you can: what are you?

FIRST WITCH

All haile, Macbeth! Haile to thee, Thane of  
Glamis!

SECOND WITCH

All haile, Macbeth! Haile to thee, Thane of  
Cawdor!

THIRD WITCH

All haile, Macbeth, that shalt be king here-  
after!

BANQUO

Good sir, why doe you start, and seeme to  
feare

Things that doe sound so faire?

TO WITCHES

I' th' name of truth,

Are ye fantastickall, or that indeed  
Which outwardly ye shew? My noble part-  
ner

You greet with present grace and great pre-  
diction

Of noble having and of royall hope,  
That he seemes wrapt withall; to me you  
speake not.

If you can looke into the seedes of time  
And say which graine will grow and which  
will not,

Speake then to me, who neyther begge nor  
feare

Your favors nor your hate.

THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶ 48 The rhythms of the first two prophecies are identical, thus: " ' x ' | | ' x " ' x ' x ; the third has its last phrase slightly slowed ' " " " " ' x giving a peculiar finale effect to the prediction, an interesting improvement upon Holinshed's "All Haile Macbeth Thane of Glamis! Haile, Macbeth, Thane of Cawdor! All haile Macbeth, that hereafter shalt be King of Scotland!" ¶ 53 FANTASTICALL is the regular EL. word for 'imaginary'; cp. I. 3. 139 and N.E.D. I; here it means 'creatures of the imagination.' ¶ 54 SHEW has already occurred in its EL. sense of 'appear,' cp. I. 2. 15. PARTNER is commonly used in EL. E. in the sense of 'companion,' 'colleague'; in Cor. v. 3. 2 Coriolanus calls Aufidius his "partner," so in I. 3. 142. ¶ 55 GRACE is more than 'favour' here: rather 'good fortune' (N.E.D. 10), as in Ham. 1. 3. 53, "A double blessing is a double grace." ¶ 56 HAVING is EL. E. for 'property,' 'estate'; cp. Jonson, "Every Man in his Humour" I. 4, "Lye in a water-bearer's house! a Gentleman of his havings!" ¶ 57 THAT corresponds to MN. E. 'so that,' as in I. 2. 57. WRAPT is a common 17th century spelling for 'rapt,' probably due to confusing the word in the EL. idiom 'rapt in,' i.e. 'dazed by,' which occurs in I. 5. 6, with "wrapt in," 'wrapped in,' 'enfolded by.' WITHALL is in EL. E. an adverb, like the German 'damit,' and corresponds to MN. E. 'with it,' 'with them,' etc. These half jesting words of Banquo's show what a deep impression the witches' prophecy has made on Macbeth's mind. ¶ 58 SEEDS and "germins," as in IV. 1. 59, were favorite 17th century forms under which to think of the elements of the universe; TIME connoted a much wider range of association in EL. E. than it does now, being often used as here for the general course of things. In 2Hen.4 III. I.

ACT I      SCENE III      62-72

# FIRST WITCH

Hayle!

## SECOND WITCH

Hayle!

### THIRD WITCH

Hayle!

# FIRST WITCH

Lesser then Macbeth, and greater.

## SECOND WITCH

Not so happy, yet much happier.

### THIRD WITCH

Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none:

So all haile, Macbeth and Banquo!

# FIRST WITCH

Banquo and Macbeth, all haile!

MACBETH

Stay, you imperfect speakers; tell me more!

By Sinell's death I know I am Thane of

Glamis,

But how of Cawdor? the Thane of Cawdor  
lives,

80 ff. the same notion occurs: "There is a historie in all men's lives, Figuring the nature of the times decaas'd: The which observ'd, a man may prophetic With a neere ayme of the maine chance of things As yet not come to life, which in their seedes And weake beginnings lye entreasured; Such things become the hatch and brood of Time."

¶ 62 ff. Again the formal rhythm series thrice repeated, and again "Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none, with the finale effe. HAPPY, of course, has here its EL. meaning of 'fortunate.' ¶ 69 The change in the order of names implies an equal distribution of favor, as in Ham. 11. 2. 33, where the king's "Thankes, Rosincrance and gentle Guildensterne" is followed by the queen's kindly "Thankes, Guildensterne and gentle Rosincrance." ¶ 70 Macbeth calls them IMPERFECT SPEAKERS because of

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

the incompleteness, not because of the unintelligibility of what they have said: the adj. "perfect" in EL.E. connotes completeness of information; cp. "perfect'st report" I. 5. 2, and "in your state of honor I am perfect," i.e. 'well informed,' IV. 2. 66.

¶ 71 The death of Sinel—the name seems originally to have been 'Finel,' corrupted through the likeness of the written forms of *S* and *F* to "Sinel," as was 'Foris,' to "Soris" above—is mentioned by Holinshed in connection with the First Witch's salutation: "All haile, Macbeth, thane of Glammis (for he had entered into that dignitie and office by the death of his father Sinell)." ¶ 72 Macbeth may well be ignorant of Cawdor's treachery. Shakspeare's words, as pointed out above, do not imply that the traitor was present at the battle. ¶ 74 STANDS NOT WITHIN THE PROSPECT OF BELEEFE is like "Shall come . . . into the eye and prospect of his soule" Ado IV. 1. 231, and "Nothing that can be can come betweene me and the full prospect of my hopes" Tw. N. III. 4. 90, with the word used to connote a mental range of vision. EL. thinking was full of such metaphors for the perceptive powers of the mind; cp. N.E.D. 'eye' 4 c and 8. The double negative STANDS NOT . . . NO MORE violates only our modern notions of grammar; in literary English up to the 17th century, and still in popular English, such idioms are common. ¶ 75 The two parallel forms "thanne" and "thenne" in M.E. remained in EL.E. as THAN and THEN; 'than' has since been set apart for use in comparison, while 'then' remains temporal. ¶ 76 The word OWE in O.E. and M.E. meant 'to possess,' 'to obtain,' as well as 'to be under obligation to,' a double meaning still retained in Shakspeare's time. ¶ 78 -que in PROPHETIQUE is merely the French spelling of a final *k*, giving such EL.E. forms as "musique," "antique" (still preserved), "politique," etc.

¶ 79 The Folio reads HA'S, as often; but this is a mere gratuitous piece of philological information—and incorrect, as such information usually is—on the part of the printer, who seems to have supposed that "has" was formed from "haves" by dropping the *ve*. ¶ 80 THESE ARE OF THEM, i.e. 'these are some of them,' is a partitive genitive idiom, now obsolete, but common in the 17th century; cp. "He sent thither straight of the best soldiers he had about him" North, 'Plutarch,' ed. 1595, p. 240. ARE

## ACT I

## SCENE III

73-78

A prosperous gentleman: and to be king  
Stands not within the prospect of beleefe,  
No more then to be Cawdor. Say from whence  
You owe this strange intelligence, or why  
Upon this blasted heath you stop our way  
With such prophetique greeting? Speake, I  
charge you.

WITCHES VANISH

## ACT I

## SCENE III

79-85

BANQUO

The earth hath bubbles as the water has,  
And these are of them: whither are they van-  
ish'd?

MACBETH

Into the ayre; and what seem'd corporall  
Melted as breath into the winde.  
Would they had stay'd!

BANQUO

Were such things here as we doe speake  
about?

Or have we eaten on the insane root  
That takes the reason prisoner?



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

THEY VANISH'D is another M.E. and EL.E. idiom still familiar from Bible English, but obsolete in our thinking, through which 'is,' not 'have,' forms the auxiliary for past time with verbs of motion. ¶81 CORPORALL is EL.E. for 'material,' 'substantial'; cp. N.E.D., especially the quotation from West, 'Symboleographia,' 1592, "Corporal things are such as of their own nature may be felt or seen." Modern editors take MELTED from the next verse and add it to this, bringing up WOULD THEY HAD STAY'D, which is printed as a separate verse in the Folio, to fill the measure of v. 82. This quite mars the graphic rhythm in "Melted as breath," and the effect of astonishment produced by the incomplete verse following with its necessary pause after WINDE. Despite the fact that the verse division of FO. I is not always to be trusted, the verses are probably correct as they stand; but the reader may make the improvement for himself if his sense of rhythm will justify it. ¶82 For MELT in the sense of 'fade away,' cp. "the boy . . . was melted like a vapour from her sight" Ven.&Ad. 1166. ¶84 To EAT ON or UPON is a common EL.E. idiom corresponding to MN.E. 'eat of,' 'taste of,' cp. N.E.D. 'eat' 3 c. INSANE in the sense of 'making insane' seems to be a translation of *insana* in '*herba insana*,' the name by which henbane was known in Shakspeare's time. Douce, 'Illustrations,' I, p. 372, quotes 'Batman uppon Bartholome,' ed. 1582, XVII, 87: "Henbane is called *Insana*, mad, . . . for if it be eat or dronke it breedeth madnesse . . . Therefore this hearb is called commonly *Mirilidium* for it taketh away wit and reason"; cp. Holyoke's Latin Dictionary, 1677, s.v. '*insanus*': "*insana herba*, henbane sic dicitur per metonomiam quia comedentes facit *insanas*": Coles, 1679, also has "*insana herba*, henbane." Shakspeare may have been thinking of the "roots of hemlock," cp. IV. I. 25, referred to in Greene's Never Too Late, 1590: "you have eaten of the roots of hemlock, that makes men's eyes conceit unseen objects" (cited by Steevens), and either borrowed the epithet from "*herba insana*" or

ACT I SCENE III 86-88

MACBETH

Your children shall be kings.

BANQUO

You shall be king.

MACBETH

And 'Thane of Cawdor,' too: went it not so?

BANQUO

To th' selfe-same tune and words. Who's here?

ENTER ROSSE AND ANGUS

confounded henbane and hemlock. Florio's gloss "*cicuta*, henbane, kex and hearbe bennet" shows clearly such a confusion, for *cicuta* is Latin for hemlock, for which "kex" and "herb-bennet" (*herba benedicta*) are EL.E. equivalents.

¶87 In repeating the THANE OF CAWDOR Macbeth probably imitated the peculiar rhythm which marked the witch's prophecy, and thus occasioned Banquo's remark which follows. The reference in TUNE, v. 88, is to rhythm, not to melody: one of Webbe's

rules of poetry, 'A Discourse of English Poesie,' 1586, ed. Arber, p. 57, is that a "meeter or verse . . . be proportionable to the tune whereby it is to be measured." It is the prompt fulfilment of the "Thane of Cawdor" part of the prophecy that is the key to Macbeth's implicit belief in the supernatural power of the witches: cp. I. 3. 119, 122, 133. And Shakspeare keeps these words before our minds, not varying their order or stress relations, so that the title comes to have an ominous ring in the early part of the play. With the same iterating insistence "Birnam wood" and "Dunsinane" are thrust upon the attention later on, till they, too, come to have an ominous ring. ¶88 Such EL.E. forms as TO TH' have already been explained; this is one of the four-wave verses that are frequent in Macbeth.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶91 IN goes with READES rather than with VENTURE, and the phrase means 'infers from,' 'gathers from'; cp. "In the modesty of fearefull duty [i.e. a duty performed fearfully] I read as much as from the rattling tongue" Mids. V. 101, and "read not my blemishes in the world's report" Ant. & Cl. II. 3. 5; cp. too, 1 Hen. 4 IV. 1. 49. This notion of 'inference' was prominently attached to the word in M.E., continued through the 17th century (cp. e.g. Coles, 1679, "read, ghesse, *divino*"), and survives in some MN.E. phrases like "read one's secret." FIGHT was up to the beginning of the 18th century used to connote the action of fighting, a sense of the word preserved in 'valiant in fight,' 'to show fight.' Shakspeare calls Mars the god of fight in Ven. & Ad. II. 4 (cp. N.E.D. I), and Cooper, 'Thesaurus,' glosses "*aspera pugna surgit*" by "sore fight beginneth." 'Fighting' seems to be the sense intended here, and

REBELS of FO. I is therefore singular, Rosse's meaning being: 'When he infers from the rebel's fighting what your personal risk was,' etc. ¶93 THINE and HIS seem to be used here as objective genitives, and the sense to be 'contend which should take the form of praise due to Macbeth's prowess and which should take the form of wonder affecting Duncan at Macbeth's miraculous escape from danger.' A similar use of HIS occurs in "gazing in a doubt Whether those peales of praise be his or no," Merch. III. 2. 146, and a similar use of 'contend' in "Death and Nature doe contend about them, Whether they live or dye" II. 2. 7. Duncan is nonplussed by (the preposition WITH as often in EL. E. corresponds to MN.E. 'by') this contention: cp. 'Phraseologia Generalis,' Cambridge, 1681, "he was quite blank; silent; at a non plus: . . . *obstupuit*." ¶95 STOUT means 'proud' as well as 'bold' in EL. E.; cp. "As stout and proud as he were lord of all" 2 Hen. 6 I. 1. 187. ¶96 NOTHING is adverbial, 'not at all,' and AFEARD OF is a common EL. E. synonym of 'frightened by.' ¶97 For the meaning of STRANGE IMAGES OF DEATH, i.e. 'unusual types or forms of death,' cp. "images of revolt" Lear II. 4. 91. Purchas in his 'Pilgrimage,' vol. V, describing the destruction of Jerusalem, says: "Everywhere the eye is entertained with differing spectacles of diversified Deaths"; and Sidney, 'Arcadia' (Sommer's repr., p. 268) makes use of the same notion in "So was the face therof [i.e. of the earth] hidden with dead bodies to whome Death had come masked in diverse manners." THICK AS HAILE: (misprinted in FO. I "Thick as Tale") is a common EL. comparison, cp. 'Phr. Gen.,' "as thick as hail, *in modum grandinis*," and Purchas, 'Pilgrimage,' V. 901, "The fowles flew over them as thicke as haile." ¶98 RAN, likewise, is misprinted "Can"

ACT I

SCENE III

89-103

ROSSE

The king hath happily receiv'd, Macbeth,  
The newes of thy successe: and when he  
reads

Thy personall venture in the rebel's fight,  
His wonders and his prayes doe contend  
Which should be thine or his: silenc'd with  
that,

In viewing o're the rest o' th' selfe-same day,  
He findes thee in the stout Norweyan rankes,  
Nothing afeard of what thy selfe didst make,  
Strange images of death. As thick as haile  
Ran post with post, and every one did beare  
Thy prayes in his kingdomes great defence,  
And powr'd them downe before him.

ANGUS

Wee are sent

To give thee from our royall master thanks  
Onely to harrold thee into his sight,  
Not pay thee.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

in FO. I. Many editors read "Came"; but 'run' is of common occurrence in connection with POST, 'messenger,' and involves only one misprint, while "Came" involves three. ¶ 102 ONELY TO is used, as the punctuation shows, in its EL. sense of 'merely in order to'; cp. "as fond fathers Having bound up the threatning twigs of birch Onely to stick it in their children's sight For terror" Meas. 1.3.25. Misapprehending this sense, modern editors alter the comma of the Folio after THANKS to a semicolon, which led Hudson to conjecture that WEE ARE SENT should be "we are not sent." HARROLD is an EL.

ACT I SCENE III 104-117

ROSSE

And for an earnest of a greater honor,  
He bad me, from him, call thee thane of  
Cawdor:

In which addition, haile, most worthy thane!  
For it is thine.

BANQUO

What! can the devill speake true?

MACBETH

The Thane of Cawdor lives: why doe you  
dresse me

In borrowed robes?

ANGUS

Who was the thane lives yet,  
But under heavie judgement beares that life  
Which he deserves to loose. Whether he  
was combin'd

With those of Norway, or did lyne the rebell  
With hidden helpe and vantage, or that with  
both

He labour'd in his countreyes wracke, I know  
not;

But treasons capitall, confess'd and prov'd,  
Have overthrowne him.

MACBETH

'Glamys,' and 'Thane of Cawdor'!  
The greatest is behinde.

TO ROSSE AND ANGUS

Thankes for your paines.

form of MN.E. "herald," cp. N.E.D. ¶ 105 FROM HIM means 'by his authority,' cp. "I do it . . from Lord Angelo by speciall charge" Meas. 1. 2. 123, not 'as a favor from him,' as the MN.E. words suggest. ¶ 106 ADDITION is a regular EL. synonym for 'title,' cp. III. 1. 100. ¶ 107 DEVILL is generally monosyllabic, 'deel,' in Shakspeare, cp. Schmidt's Shaks. Lexicon for instances. This, wrongly supposed a dialect form, is common in EL. literary English, and is no more dialect than is our MN.E. "ill" from "evill," "ivill." ¶ 109 WHO is M.E. and EL.E. syntax corresponding to MN.E. 'he who.' ¶ 110 BEARES seems here to be used in its sense of 'possess,' 'maintain,' 'keep,' cp. "beare a charmed life" V. 8. 12. ¶ 111 COMBIN'D carries with it the meaning 'in league with'; EL.E. "combination" is a regular word for 'league,' 'alliance', N.E.D. 4 c. It is best to treat the verse as one of six waves, notwithstanding that WHETHER is often a monosyllable, "wher," in EL.E., for "cómbined" is not found in Shakspeare. ¶ 112 LYNE is EL.E. for 'furnish,' 'support'; cp. "who lin'd himselfe with hope" 2Hen.4 1.3.27. ¶ 113 VANTAGE is EL.E. for 'opportunity,' 'advantage,' cp. I. 2. 31; THAT in M.E. and early New English (e. N. E.) often serves, as here, to repeat a connective; cp. I.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

7. 4. Rosse and Angus know only the fact of Cawdor's treachery, and their ignorance of its details, like Macbeth's ignorance of the fact, vaguely points to secret treachery on Cawdor's part.

## ACT I

## SCENE III

118-127

TO BANQUO

Doe you not hope your children shall be kings,  
When those that gave the 'Thane of Cawdor' to me

Promis'd no lesse to them?

BANQUO

That, trusted home,  
Might yet enkindle you unto the crowne,  
Besides the Thane of Cawdor. But 't is  
strange:

And oftentimes, to winne us to our harme,  
The instruments of darknesse tell us truths,  
Winne us with honest trifles to betray's  
In deepest consequence.

TO ROSSE AND ANGUS

Cousins, a word, I pray you.

¶ 119 GAVE . . TO is EL. E. for 'declared that I was'; cp. Rom. & Jul. IV. 5. 116, "I will give you the minstrell"; we still use the idiom in "to give the lie direct." The stress seems to be on ME as contrasted with THEM: possibly an elision was intended here as in "t' our," "t' an," "t' whom," cp. note on I. 6. 24. "t'" for 'to' before infinitives beginning with a consonant frequently occurs in Ben Jonson, likewise "unt'" and "int'" before following pronouns. ¶ 120 NO LESSE, i.e. 'nothing less than kingship.' The period instead of the interrogation-point after THEM in FO. I seems to be a misprint. It must be borne in mind that Macbeth and Banquo are jesting; cp. Holinshed, p. 170 (Stone's ed., p. 24), "this [the meeting with the witches] was reputed at the first but some vaine fantastick illusion by Macbeth and Banquo, insomuch that Banquo would call Macbeth in jest King of Scotland; and Macbeth againe would call him in sport likewise the father of manie kings." HOME is an EL. adverb meaning 'thoroughly,' 'entirely,' cp. "revenged home" Lear III. 3. 13, "satisfie home" Cym. III. 5. 92, "know . . home" All's W. V. 3. 3, and Cotgrave "*à fonds de cuve*, thoroughly, fully, largely, home." ¶ 121 ENKINDLE TO is EL. E. for 'incite to obtain,' cp. N. E. D. I b. ¶ 123 AND indicates an ellipsis of "perhaps true, for." These witches are to Banquo's mind the agents of Satan: Gifford, 'Dialogue,' Percy Soc., p. 36, says the devils "deale by such instruments" as witches, and, p. 22, quotes S. Paul as calling the "divils" "the rulers of the darknesse of this world"; on p. 55 he writes "they make shew of doing good unto men only of a most cruell and murtherous purpose, even to draw men deeper into the pit of hell with them." (The latter citation is in Shaks. Soc. Trans., '80-'85, pt. I, Proceedings for Feb. 9, 1883, p. 63.) ¶ 125 TRIFLES in EL. E. still had its M. E. meaning of 'tricks,' cp. "some enchanted trifle to abuse [MN. E. 'deceive'] me" Temp. V. 112; and this meaning, with HONEST in the sense of 'seeming true,' as in "honest slanders" Ado III. 1. 84, appears to be implied by Banquo. Such contractions as BETRAY'S are common in EL. E. ¶ 126 IN is EL. E. for 'into,' cp. "draw in(to) consequence" N. E. D. 'consequence' I b. DEEPEST is EL. E. for MN. E. 'gravest,' and CONSEQUENCE has sharper reference to succession than now. So that Banquo's words do not so much mean 'are faithful to us in matters of small importance and betray us in matters of serious consequence,' but rather 'win our confidence in order to seduce us into grave error.' Macbeth has affected by his jest to make light of a prediction which at the same time promises kingship to himself and to Banquo's children: Banquo's retort, though in jest, at once unmasks the affectation and parries its implication that the prophecy means as much for him as it does for Macbeth—YOU has a slight

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

verse-stress: 'If you wanted to believe the prediction concerning the kingship this apparent conflict in details would only serve as "yet" another confirmation of it "besides the Thane of Cawdor."' He does not explain his words further, but their import lies in the fact that Macbeth has no heir. In Holinshed Macbeth draws Banquo into his conspiracy; but in Shakspeare Banquo never even admits to Macbeth his community of interest in the witches' prediction, though Shakspeare hints that he was not unaffected by the words of the weird sisters; cp. III. 1. 6 and II. 1. 20. Banquo's latter words, foreshadowing the 'deep consequence' of Macbeth's trust in the instruments of darkness, whether a dramatic aside—and they may well be such, for asides are not indicated in the Folio—or a general remark, the deep meaning of which Macbeth already absorbed in thoughts of his own great future fails to catch, are the theme of the tragedy. Macbeth's "betrayal" has its "final consequence" in a fact which is essentially tragic; but its deeper tragedy lies in the

ACT I SCENE III 127–138

MACBETH

ASIDE

Two truths are told,

As happy prologues to the swelling act  
Of the imperiall theame.

TO ROSSE AND ANGUS

I thanke you, gentlemen.

ASIDE

This supernaturall solliciting  
Cannot be ill; cannot be good: if ill,  
Why hath it given me earnest of successe,  
Commencing in a truth? I am Thane of  
Cawdor:

If good, why doe I yeeld to that suggestion  
Whose horrid image doth unfixe my heire  
And make my seated heart knock at my  
ribbes

Against the use of nature? Present feares  
Are lesse then horrible imaginings:

proud and stately, *s'enfler*," and "swelling scene" Hen.5, Prol. 4. ¶ 129 IMPERIALl illustrates a common EL.E. use of the adjective where MN.E. prefers the preposition and noun; the phrase is equivalent to 'theme of empire,' just as "generall use" in 1.2.62 corresponds to MN.E. 'expenditures of state.' THEAME in EL.E. denotes the subject of an action as well as the subject of a thought or discussion, cp. Cor. II.2.61. GENTLEMEN was often dissyllabic in literary EL.E. and frequently printed "gent'men": 'gen'men,' heard among cultivated people of the South and corrupted by the negroes to 'gemmen,' may be a descendant of this EL. form. ¶ 130 SOLLICITING is 'advocacy of my interests,' not 'temptation,' as it is usually understood to mean; cp. IV.3.149. ¶ 131 ILL seems to mean 'dangerous,'

the shattering of his whole manhood which attends the very "first motion" of his "dreadful" purpose, a tragic consequence which he now becomes aware of. He unconsciously thinks of the new and unreal world in which he finds himself as a scene from a play.

¶ 127 The significance of the TWO lies in the fact that the death of the Thane of Glamis and the consequent succession of Macbeth to his father's earldom were circumstances which, for some reason or other, the witches were not likely to know of. Shakspeare leaves this to our imagination, nor does Holinshed throw any light upon the matter. ¶ 128 HAPPY here practically means 'felicitously written,' cp. "happy verse" Timon I. 1. 16. PROLOGUES were often prefixed to the several acts of a play, as in Hen.5. SWELLING had in EL.E. the connotation of 'proud,' 'magnificent,' cp. Baret, 'Alvearie,' "to begin to swell, to wax



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

'likely to turn out badly,' not 'wicked'; cp. "I told thee they [*i.e.* prawnes] were ill for a greene wound" 2Hen.4 II.1.106 (N.E.D. 3). ¶ 132 EARNEST is used in its now rather unusual sense of 'pledge'; and SUCSESSE in EL.E. had more notion of sequence than it now has. ¶ 133 I AM was probably intended for the contraction "I'm." ¶ 134 GOOD, the opposite of ILL, means 'tending to well-being,' N.E.D.7 b. Macbeth is not thinking of the moral consequences of the "suggestion," but of the effect his yielding to it has on his "state of man"; as far as its relation to Macbeth's character goes, the deed is already done. He is not struggling with temptation, as he seems to be when his words are read as MN.E., but is becoming aware of a confusion of soul brought about by his willingness to employ instruments of darkness whose watchword is "faire is foul and foul is faire." He is yielding unresistantly; his conflict with the powers of evil is over, if it ever took place; the mere perception of the fact that supernatural influences are working in his favour crystallizes his ambition so that no solvent of conscience or scruple, no "milk of human kindness" can do other than trouble and muddy his peace of mind with realizations of "consequence" which a sting of pride or pang of fear will straight drive back to kennel. His 'moral reason,' if we may use the term, is dethroned.

This agitation of mind forebodes disaster: cp. "As heavines foretels some harme at hand, So minds disturb'd presage ensuing ills" Bodenhams, 'Belvedere,' ed. 1600, p. 160. SUGGESTION in EL.E. also connotes 'temptation,' cp. "Suggestions are to other as to me" L.L.L. I.1.159. ¶ 135 IMAGE expresses a realization of a situation by imagination like MN.E. 'idea,' cp. "the image of it gives me content already" Meas. III.1.270. UNFIXE is of course merely 'to loosen,' and not a misprint for "upfix," cp. IV.1.96 and Ham. I.5.18, a notion carried further in ¶ 136 SEATED [*i.e.* fixed]. Steevens quotes 'Paradise Lost' VI.643: "From thir foundations loosning to and fro They pluckt the seated hills." ¶ 137 AGAINST THE USE OF NATURE seems to mean, not that such symptoms of fear are unnatural, but that they are unusual to Macbeth: NATURE in EL.E. frequently means 'character,' 'disposition,' cp. II.4.16, and USE commonly means 'custom,' cp. I.3.146. If THE has here the definite sense it has in I.2.6 and is equivalent to a light MN.E. 'my,' the expression is like that found in North's Plutarch, p. 1071: "Cassius . . was full of thoughts [*i.e.* anxieties], although it was against his nature." FEARES is EL.E. for 'objects of fear,' 'things to be feared,' cp. N.E.D.5 d. PRESENT, *i.e.* 'present before one,' such dangers as Macbeth has been used to confronting; Harrison, 'Description of England,' ed. Furnivall, I. p. 13, writing of the excommunication of King John, speaks of the then archbishop as "the present Archbishop of Canturburie," meaning the archbishop who was present at the meeting between king and clergy at Lincoln. Macbeth's words reveal a sense of changed character: he recognizes it by the presence of fear, which has hitherto been a stranger to him, and of indecision, which is likewise unfamiliar; he sees its effects in a constraint of conduct as if he were already under suspicion, and in an inability to determine essential relations as if he were already insane.

The passage that follows must be understood in terms of EL. psychology, by which the *ego*, with its controlling powers of will, conscience, and right imagination making for the good, is conceived as the head of a state, having the "mortal instruments" of the body as its executive agents. The best comment on the passage is found in Cæs. II.1.63 ff., where Shakspeare describes the effect of a murderous purpose on Brutus's mind, saying that 'All the interval between the first conception of a dreadful purpose and its execution is a "phantasma" or a hideous dream: the personality of the individual ("genius") and his bodily powers (the "mortal instruments") are then in secret sympathy ("in counsell"),' "and the state of man, Like to a little kingdome, suffers then The nature of an [*i.e.* a kind of] insurrection"; *i.e.* will and conscience are deposed, and the man is no longer master of himself and of his acts. It is a state of mind to which all is nightmare, a hideous dream, which brings its subject to "thinke that which is nothyng is somewhat, and fele that thyng which he feleth not and to se that thing which he seeth not."



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

Such dreams are, according to Boorde's Dietary, E. E. T. S. selections, p. 79, the forerunner of "madnes named Mania," and a cause of them is "fantasticalnes, or collucion or illusyons of the devyll." This awful nightmare of soul is the price of Macbeth's col-

lusion with the instruments of darkness. He shall "sleep no more," but on the "torture of the minde" shall "lye in restlesse extasie" till, spent with life, he shall cry, "it is a tale Told by an ideot, full of sound and fury, Signifying nothing."

ACT I SCENE III 139-144

My thought, whose murther yet is but fantastical,  
Shakes so my single state of man that function

Is smother'd in surmise, and nothing is  
But what is not.

BANQUO

TO ROSSE AND ANGUS

Looke how our partner's rapt.

MACBETH

ASIDE

If chance will have me king, why, chance  
may crowne me,  
Without my stirre.

¶ 139 In EL. E. the word THOUGHT covered a far wider range of association than it does in MN. E., and included 'purpose,' 'design,' 'hope,' 'expectation': here the purpose notion seems uppermost, Macbeth's ambition of kingship now doubly strong from the trust he has in the witches' prediction. The word is used in the sense of 'ambition' in Jonson's *Sejanus* V. I. 34: "I did not live till now; this [*i.e.* this is] my first hower, Wherein I see my

thoughts reach'd by my power." The murderous aspects of this THOUGHT are as yet only FANTASTICALL, *i.e.* 'imaginary' (cp. I. 3. 53), but they shake Macbeth's hitherto SINGLE, *i.e.* 'simple,' 'united,' 'harmonious,' STATE OF MAN into mutiny and insurrection. ¶ 140 The notion of the soul of man being a kingdom is not an uncommon one in EL. E. Jonson, in 'Every Man in his Humour' II. 3, ed. 1640, p. 20, makes use of a similar figure:

"Is't like [*i.e.* likely] that factious beauty will preserve

The publicke weale of Chastitie unshaken,

When such strong motives [*i.e.* impulses, "thoughts"] muster and make head  
Against her single peace?"

(It is interesting to note that "Will. Shakspeare" was the first of the "Principall Comedians" in this play when it was acted in 1598, and probably played the rôle of Kately, the actor who speaks these words.) Cp. also *Lear* III. I. 10 and *2Hen. 4* IV. 3. 118. The same psychology occurs in *John* IV. 2. 245:

"Nay, in the body of this fleshly land,

This kingdome, this confine of blood and breathe,

Hostilitie, and civill tumult reignes

Between my conscience and my cosin's death."

EL. E. FUNCTION is defined in N. E. D. as 'activity of intellectual powers'; the word seems here to refer to such normal activity as is revealed in outward conduct, gesture; cp. "his whole function suiting With formes to [*i.e.* according to] his conceit" *Ham.* II. 2. 582. ¶ 141 To SURMISE in EL. E. is 'to accuse,' 'to bring forward a charge,' cp. Baret's *Al-*

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

vearie, "to surmise, or devise a forged crime"; here, and in the phrase "such exufflicate and blow'd surmises" Oth. III. 3. 182, the noun also seems to have this connotation of 'accusation.' Macbeth's self-accusation renders him powerless to control his conduct. Unlike Iago, who boasts "I am not what I am," whose very element is duplicity and unreality, Macbeth, man of action and realities as he is, is appalled by his situation: "nothing is but what is not." ¶ 142 Banquo's remark and his explanation call attention to Macbeth's RAPT state. PARTNER, as has already been pointed out, merely means 'companion' in EL. E. ¶ 144 STIRRE is EL. E. for 'action,' 'activity,' cp. "you shall know . . of stirres abroad" Ant. & Cl.

1.4.82. Macbeth's decision to let chance run its course is continued in vv. 146, 147.

## ACT I

## SCENE III

144-152

BANQUO

TO ROSSE AND ANGUS

New honors come upon him

Like our strange garments cleave not to  
their mould

But with the aid of use.

MACBETH

ASIDE

Come what come may,

Time and the houre runs through the rough-  
est day.

BANQUO

Worthy Macbeth, wee stay upon your leysure.

MACBETH

Give me your favour: my dull braine was  
wrought

With things forgotten.

TO ROSSE AND ANGUS

Kinde gentlemen, your paines

Are registred where every day I turne

The leafe to reade them. Let us toward  
the king.

¶ 144 COME seems to be the verb, not the participle, and the construction one of those EL. ἀπὸ κοινοῦ idioms through which a single verb is made to do duty for two subjects—'New honors come upon him as do our new garments, which assume their proper shape only with the wearing.' LIKE as an adverb is common in EL. E. ¶ 145 STRANGE has its EL. sense of 'new,' 'unfamiliar.' ¶ 147 Macbeth's proverbial philosophy continues the thought of v. 143 and means that the most unpromising day has its opportunity, not Cotgrave's "the longest day will have a dawning," i.e. come to an end. As Fate is on his side, he will await Fate's opportunity, not seek to forestall it. The proverb has not yet been found in the form which Macbeth uses, but there can be little doubt as to its meaning: TIME and HOURE are constantly used in EL. E. in the sense of 'fitting time' and 'appointed hour'; cp. "Wee see which way the streame of Time doth runne, And are enforc'd from our most quiet there, by the rough torrent of occasion" 2Hen.4 IV. 1.70 ff. The singular verb with plural subject is an idiom found in almost every EL. writer. To our strict classic notions of congruence it seems ungrammatical, but it is far too frequent in the best writers of the 16th century to allow us to suppose that it gave offence to a 16th century audience. ¶ 148 WEE STAY UPON YOUR LEYSURE is a conventional phrase meaning 'we wait for you,' cp. N. E. D. 'leisure' 3 c. ¶ 149 Macbeth's answer is also conventional and is tantamount to 'Pardon my absent-mindedness'; cp. "Pray give me favour, sir" Hen.8 I. 1. 168. The division of the following verses, 149-156, in the Folio is

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

Give . . favour, My . . forgotten, Kinde . . registred, Where . . leafe, To . . them, Let . . upon, What . . time, The . . speake. EL. WROUGHT, the preterite of "work," means 'anxiously occupied with'; cp. "thy heart's workings" Sonn. XCIII, II, and "I am sicke with working of my thoughts" I Hen. 6 v. 5. 86. In ¶ 150 we have the extra syllable before the cæsura as in I. 3. 72. Macbeth's words already smack of sovereignty as he tells Rosse and Angus that their services are noted down in the 'tablets of his memory.' ¶ 152 Such omissions of the verb are common in M. E. and EL. E. and still occur

in MN. E. poetry. TOWARD is monosyllabic; intervocalic *w* in such words, including "coward," is often lost in EL. E.

## ACT I SCENE III 153-156

TO BANQUO

Thinke upon what hath chanc'd, and at more time,

The interim having weigh'd it, let us speake  
Our free hearts each to other.

BANQUO

Very gladly.

MACBETH

Till then, enough. Come, friends.

EXEUNT

¶ 153 AT MORE TIME is 'with better opportunity,' cp. "At our more leysure" Meas. I. 3. 49, and "at more leasure you shall understand of me" Sidney, 'Arcadia,' p. 60, illustrating a very common M. E. and EL. E. use of "more" in the sense of 'greater,' 'better,' 'stronger,' etc. ¶ 154 INTERIM seems to be the subject of HAVING WEIGH'D, 'lapse of time having enabled

us to see the matter in its true light.' It is italicized in the Folio because a foreign word in Shakspeare's time, cp. "all the *Interim* is" Cæs. II. I. 64. There is no adverbial phrase "the interim" in N. E. D.: when the notion is adverbial "the" is omitted. ¶ 155 FREE HEARTS is EL. E. for 'frank, unrestrained thoughts,' cp. "speake his very heart" Wint. T. IV. 4. 575, and "give me leave To have free speech with you" Meas. I. 1. 78. But Macbeth and Banquo never speak "their free hearts each to other": their conversation about their meeting with the witches is from first to last equivocal. Even here Macbeth uses a word for 'frank' that also means 'innocent.' Banquo does "thinke upon what hath chanc'd," and deeply too: but to talk freely about it is impossible; see the opening verses of Act III.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SCENE IV

Like so many of Shakspeare's scenes, this one begins with the end of an action. Cawdor's execution, like his treason, is kept in the background, for it is the effect which flows from it and not the fact itself which is of interest to the play. It furnishes a linking association, too, between the scenes in the fact that Cawdor's discovered treachery is of little consequence to Duncan compared with the intended treachery of Macbeth. Steevens thought that Shakspeare, in describing the execution of Cawdor, had in mind Essex's behaviour on the scaffold in 1601: this may well be, though such scenes were not uncommon in the London of Shakspeare's day. The motive for the immediate execution of the murder which Scene IV leads up to is contained in 48 ff. Macbeth has been the natural heir to the crown after Duncan. Duncan's making of his son Prince of Cumberland is tantamount to settling the succession on him, a consequence which Macbeth's victory brings about. This act of Duncan's brings Macbeth's ambition to a head and makes it impossible for chance to crown him king without his stir.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

SCENE IV: THE PALACE AT FORRES: FLOURISH

ENTER KING MALCOLME

DONALBAIN LENOX AND ATTENDANTS

I—14

KING



Execution done on Cawdor; or  
not  
Those in commission yet re-  
turn'd?

MALCOLME

My liege,

They are not yet come back. But I have  
spoke

With one that saw him die, who did report  
That very frankly hee confess'd his treasons,  
Implor'd your highnesse pardon and set forth  
A deepe repentance: nothing in his life  
Became him like the leaving it; hee dy'de  
As one that had beene studied in his death  
To throw away the dearest thing he ow'd,  
As 't were a carelesse trifle.

KING

There's no art

To finde the mindes construction in the face:  
He was a gentleman on whom I built  
An absolute trust.

¶ 1 The Folio verse division, Is . . Cawdor, Or . . return'd, My . . back, But . . die, Who . . hee, Confess'd . . pardon, And . . repentance, Nothing . . him, Like . . dy'de, is undoubtedly incorrect. But it is a question whether OR is a misprint for "are"; such omissions of the verb where it can be supplied from the context are frequently found in M.E. and e.N.E., and the king's question seems to be a double one: cp. "And I, my Lord, am Mandricard of Mexico, Whose climate fairer than Iberia's" Greene, 'Orl. Fur.' 60, where the modern editor also assumes a misprint: the words are therefore printed as in the Folio, despite Dyce's "school-girl," who would be the person most likely to "perceive that or is a misprint for are." ¶ 2 IN COMMISSION

is a legal expression meaning 'authorized to hold trial'; cp. "it is my Cosin Silence in commission with mee" 2 Hen. 4 III. 2. 97. ¶ 3 Perfect participle

had two forms in M.E. according as the O. E. final *n* was lost or retained, and many of these double forms survived in EL.E. MN.E. usually prefers the form without the *-n*, but in such words as 'grown,' 'shown,' 'spoken,' 'taken' the *-n* has been retained: so that Shakspeare's SPOKE, which is good EL.E., appears to us ungrammatical.

¶ 6 Words, like HIGHNESSE, ending in *-es* had no possessive case in M.E. In e.N.E. they sometimes, especially in the case of proper nouns, make the genitive with "his," but are often uninflected as here; the apostrophe after the *s* is a modern device. SET FORTH is in EL.E. 'to declare publicly,' a meaning still occasionally met with in MN.E. ¶ 7 EL. DEEPE, with words of emotion indicating intensity of feeling, has a somewhat wider application than in MN.E., cp. N.E.D. 8 b; though no instances are there cited for EL.E., this one seems sufficiently clear. A "deep sense of sin" would be entirely consonant with MN.E. idiom, but hardly a "deep repentance." ¶ 9 STUDIED, 'trained,' 'practised,' is in EL.E. used of persons as well as of manner; cp. North's Plutarch, 1593, p. 759, "besides that rare gift [*i.e.* of speaking well] he [Cæsar] was excellently well studied, so that doubtlesse he was counted the second man for eloquence in his time." ¶ 10 OWE



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

has here the meaning of 'possess,' cp. 1.3.76. ¶11 AS in M.E. and e.N.E. is often equivalent to MN.E. 'as if' and is followed by the subjunctive mood. CARELESSE is EL.E. for 'uncared for,' cp. "their careless harmes" Spenser, 'Faerie Queene' IV. 4.38 (N.E.D. 4 a). ART TO FINDE is a M.E. and e.N.E. idiom whose MN.E. form would be 'art of finding.'

## ACT I SCENE IV 14-27

ENTER MACBETH BANQUO ROSSE AND ANGUS

O worthyest cousin,  
The sinne of my ingratitude even now  
Was heaue on me. Thou art so farre before,  
That swiftest wing of recompence is slow  
To overtake thee. Would thou hadst lesse  
deserv'd,

That the proportion both of thanks and pay-  
ment  
Might have beene mine! onely I have left to  
say,  
More is thy due then more then all can pay.

MACBETH

The service and the loyaltie I owe,  
In doing it, payes it selfe. Your highnesse  
part  
Is to receive our duties: and our duties  
Are to your throne and state children and  
servants;  
Which doe but what they should, by doing  
every thing  
Safe toward your love and honor.

'proper apportioning.' ¶20 MINE here means 'in my power,' cp. "let that be mine," i.e. 'a thing for me to attend to,' Meas. II.2.12. ONELY and other EL. adverbs had not that fixity of position which they have in MN.E.; cp. "onely I say," i.e. 'I only say,' III. 6.2, and "onely in the world I fil up a place" A.Y.L. 1.2.204. Duncan means 'it is only left for me to say.' ¶22 OWE has both meanings here (cp. note on 1.4.10): 'the service I owe you and the loyaltie I feel,' for Macbeth would hardly represent his loyalty as an obligation; but the two notions are as one, and in the latter part of the sentence are represented by IT SELFE: 'in what I have done the pleasure of service and the honour of loyalty reward themselves.' Macbeth's heart is not "free" and both words and rhythm reflect his embarrassment. His thought, however, is the same as is contained in the king's words to Wolsey, Hen.8 III.2.179 ff., "Fairly answer'd: A loyall and obedient subject is Therein illustrated, the honor of it Does pay the act of it," i.e. the honour of loyalty rewards the act of obedience. ¶24 DUTIES is used in both senses, 'marks of respect due to a superior'

¶12 CONSTRUCTION is 'interpretation,' cp. "O illegitimate construction!" Ado III.4.50. ¶14 ABSOLUTE was often clipped in EL.E. to "abs'lute," cp. "I speake not as in absolute feare of you" IV.3.38. Duncan's remark about Cawdor, followed by the immediate entrance of Macbeth, has a peculiar pathos.

¶16 contains the extra syllable before the cæsura with a reversal after it. ¶17 In EL.E. the article is often omitted before the superlative degree: a similar instance occurs in III.3.21, "We have lost beste halfe of our affaire"; cp. "in servilst place" Drayton, 'Leg. of Duke of N.,' Sp. Soc., II.419. WING is EL.E. for 'flight' and is not a metonymy as it seems to be in MN.E.; cp. "they stoupe with the like wing" Hen.5 IV.1.112; a similar notion occurs in Wint.T.V.2.62, "which lames report to follow it." ¶19 PROPORTION is 'portion,' 'allotment' in EL.E., cp. "her promis'd proportions Came short of composition" Meas. V.1.219; it seems here to be used in an active sense and mean

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

and 'obligation,' especially that of loyalty. ¶ 25 ff. The one is personal (THRONE) and involves obedience (CHILDREN), the other is official (STATE) and involves loyalty (SERVANTS): the throne's reward of the one duty is (v. 27) LOVE, the state's reward of the other is HONOR: as obedient children subjects are 'sure' of the one, as loyal servants they are 'secure' as to the other. Macbeth may also mean that this loving and willing service makes those who tender it SAFE, *i.e.* 'beyond the power of doing harm,' cp. III. 4. 25 and Baret, 'Alvearie,' "I have kept my mind safe from committing anie evill or mischief." That 'compelled services are dangerous' was a current aphorism in Shakspeare's time. "'T is a studied not a present thought, By duty ruminated.'" The words SAFE, etc., have given great difficulty to Shakspeare editors: but to 'do a thing safe' is not English idiom, cp. N. E. D. 'do'; "safe" as the EL. adverb for 'safely' does not make sense; and 'safe to ward' spoils the metre besides causing an awkward inversion. The words refer, not to 'doing,' but to "children and servants." The text is here printed as in FO. I except that its line division, In . . selfe, Your . . duties, And . . state, Children . . should, By . . love, And . . honor, is altered to make perfect verses.

¶ 29 GROWING, 'fruitage,' cp. N. E. D. 2 b; the word was also used in EL. E. of 'advancing in power,' cp. "Men grow not in the state, but as they are planted Warme in his favours" Jonson, 'Sejanus' V. 10, and "Had he done so to great and growing men, They might have liv'd to beare, and he to taste Their fruites of dutie" Rich. 2 III. 4. 61. ¶ 30 NOR . . KNOWNENOLESSE, *i.e.* 'and . . no lesse acknowledged,' with the common EL. double-negative construction and NO LESSE in the sense of 'as much.' ¶ 32 Banquo plays upon the word GROW, thinking of it in the sense of 'becoming fixed,' 'attached to.' Milton puns on the word in 'Par. Lost' XII. 351: "grown In wealth and multitude, factious they grow." ¶ 33 YOUR OWNE, 'to your advantage, not mine.' ¶ 34 WANTON has here the sense of 'capricious,' and IN FULNESSE means 'by reason of satiety,' cp. N. E. D. 4. ¶ 35 DROPS was more frequently used in EL. E. for 'tears' than now; cp. "drops of modestie" Merch. II. 2. 195, "these foolish drops" *ibid.* II. 3. 13, and "sorrowfull drops" Titus V. 3. 154. The missing unstressed verse impulse marks the pause between the two thoughts. ¶ 37 ff.: The plural

ACT I SCENE IV 27-40

KING

Welcome hither:  
I have begun to plant thee, and will labour  
To make thee full of growing. Noble Banquo,  
That hast no lesse deserv'd, nor must be  
knowne  
No lesse to have done so: let me enfold thee  
And hold thee to my heart.

BANQUO

There if I grow,  
The harvest is your owne.

KING

My plenteous joyes,  
Wanton in fulnesse, seeke to hide themselves  
In drops of sorrow. Sonnes, kinsmen, thanes,  
And you whose places are the nearest, know,  
We will establish our estate upon  
Our eldest, Malcolme, whom we name here-  
after  
The Prince of Cumberland: which honor  
must  
Not unaccompanied invest him onely,

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

ACT I SCENE IV 41-53

But signes of noblenesse, like starres, shall  
shine  
On all deservers.

TO MACBETH

From hence to Envernes,  
And binde us further to you.

MACBETH

The rest is labor, which is not us'd for you:  
I'll be my selfe the herbenger, and make  
joyfull

The hearing of my wife with your approach;  
So humbly take my leave.

KING

My worthy Cawdor!

MACBETH

ASIDE

The Prince of Cumberland! that is a step  
On which I must fall downe, or else o're-  
leape,

For in my way it lyes. Starres, hide your  
fires,

Let not light see my black and deepe desires:  
The eye winke at the hand; yet let that bee,  
Which the eye feares, when it is done, to see.

EXIT

of majesty is usually used in M. E. and E. N. E. when princes speak. 'To establish the estate upon' is EL. legal phraseology for fixing the succession, cp. 'Phr. Gen.,' "an estate, or right, and title, *ius, autoritas*." The title PRINCE OF CUMBERLAND was the official style of the Scottish heir apparent, corresponding to 'Prince of Wales' in the English succession. Holinshead says, "shortlie after [the weird sisters episode] Duncane . . . made the elder of them, called Malcolme, prince of Cumberland as it were thereby to appoint him his successor in the kingdome, immediately after his deceasse"; the prince was still under age, according to Holinshead, and but for this appointment by the will of the sovereign Macbeth was the next heir to the crown until Malcolm came of age; hence his aside in vv. 48 ff., and Malcolm's "This murderous shaft that's shot Hath not yet lighted" in II. 3. 147.

¶ 41 SIGNES in EL. E. means 'markes of distinction,' cp. "leaving me no signe . . . To shew the world I am a gentleman" Rich. 2 III. 1. 25; there is also a graceful reference in the word to the constellations of

the heavens. ¶ 42 ENVERNES, the Folio spelling of MN. E. 'Inverness,' follows Holinshead. Modern Scotch place-names in "Inver-" were in Middle Scotch "Enver-," or "Enner-," cp. Bruce, ed. Skeat, XVI. 549, IX. 34, etc.; these earlier forms doubtless remained in the spelling of the 16th century; e.g. "Innerness" occurs in Drummond's History of Scotland, 1655, p. 65. ¶ 44 REST is used in its EL. sense of 'ease,' 'idleness'; cp. "My rest and negligence befriends thee now" Tro. & Cr. V. 6. 17. ¶ 45 A HERBENGER was a royal messenger sent to purvey lodgings for the king and his suite, N. E. D. 2. The late M. E. (I. M. E.) form of this word, "harbeger," "harbiger," developed an *n* before the *g* in E. N. E., like "messenger," "messenger." But the form without *n* was still in use in the 16th century, and this would be subject to the EL. syncopation and become HARB'GER; Shakspeare probably intended this dissyllabic form here, as Middleton evidently does in his 'Virgin Martyr,' 1622, I. 1. 6: "The harbinger to prepare their entertainment." ¶ 48 STEP in EL. E. means both 'round of a ladder' (cp. its gloss "*climacter*" in 'Phr. Gen.') and 'promotion.' The same play of meaning is found in Hen. 8 II. 4. 112: "You have



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

by fortune and his Highnesse favors, Gone slightly o're lowe steppes, and now are mounted," etc. ¶ 49 As the vowel of LEAPE was still long *e* in EL. E., not *i* as now, the word rhymed with "step," cp. note on I. I. 6. ¶ 50 EL. STARRES included the sun and moon as well as the stars and planets. ¶ 52 WINKE in EL. E. was used to connote more than a momentary closing of the eyes, cp. Sonn. LVI. 6, "fill Thy hungrie eies, even till they winck with fulnesse," and "good boy, winke at me, and say thou saw'st mee not" Timon III. I. 47. The verb is imperative.

## ACT I

## SCENE IV

54-58

### KING

True, worthy Banquo, he is full so valiant;  
And in his commendations I am fed;  
It is a banquet to me. Let's after him,  
Whose care is gone before to bid us welcome:  
It is a peerelesse kinsman.

FLOURISH: EXEUNT

¶ 54 As often in Shakspeare, the imagination must supply the preceding conversation: Banquo has been praising Macbeth's prowess and Duncan agrees: 'he is quite as

brave as you say he is.' ¶ 55 The HIS is, of course, objective genitive, 'with commendations of him.' A similar notion occurs in "cram's with prayse and make's as fat as tame things" Wint. T. I. 2. 91. ¶ 57 CARE is "loving regard," cp. "The reverent care I beare unto my lord" 2 Hen. 6 III. I. 34. ¶ 58 IT IS in M. E. and EL. E. is frequently used for 'he is' to express affection; cp. Marston, "'T is a good boy" 'Antonio and Mellida,' III. I. 105.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SCENE V

Lady Macbeth's influence over her husband, the details of her plan to murder Duncan, and her part in carrying it out, do not belong to the story of Duncan's murder as told by Holinshed, who merely says: "but speciallie his wife lay sore upon him to attempt the thing, as she that was verie ambitious, burning in unquenchable desire to beare the name of queene," p. 171. But on pp. 150 ff. is the story of the murder of King Duff, one of Duncan's predecessors: how King Duff hanged Donwald's kinsmen; how Donwald's wife, perceiving the manifest tokens of his grief, "ceased not to travell with him till she understood" its cause; how she "bare no lesse malice toward the king" and "counselled him to make him awaie"; how "Donwald being the more kindled in wrath by the words of his wife determined to follow her advice." The scene opens abruptly. Lady Macbeth is reading the latter part of Macbeth's letter as she enters. Davenant thought the opening too abrupt, and prefixed an introductory dialogue between Lady Macbeth and Lady Macduff about their absent husbands. But there can be little doubt that Davenant quite misconstrued the scene. It is one of Shakspeare's characteristics to plunge in *medias res*, leaving the imagination to supply the preceding action. We are led to suppose that letters were written by Macbeth in the interval between Scenes III and IV; we are made to infer, too, from Lady Macbeth's intimate knowledge of her husband's character that she was 'partner' in his counsels, and in her "chastise with the valour of my tongue" we read as clearly as words can say it the secret of her influence over him. It is just such touches as these that distinguish Shakspeare's plays from those of his Elizabethan contemporaries; and it is this trick of his, by which he makes the mere turn of a phrase do the work of categoric statement or of extended dialogue and action, that gives his plays their remarkable literary interest.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

SCENE V: INVERNESS: MACBETH'S CASTLE: ENTER  
MACBETH'S WIFE ALONE WITH A LETTER

I-15

LADY MACBETH      READING



THEY met me in the day of suc-  
cesse; and I have learn'd by the  
perfect'st report, they have more  
in them then mortall knowledge.  
When I burnt in desire to ques-  
tion them further, they made themselves ayre,  
into which they vanish'd. Whiles I stood  
rapt in the wonder of it, came missives from  
the king, who all-hail'd me 'Thane of Caw-  
dor'; by which title, before, these weyward  
sisters saluted me and referr'd me to the com-  
ming on of time, with 'Haile, king that shalt  
be!' This have I thought good to deliver  
thee, my dearest partner of greatnesse, that  
thou might'st not loose the dues of rejoycing  
by being ignorant of what greatnesse is prom-  
is'd thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell."

¶ I IN THE DAY OF SUC-  
CESSE means 'on the day  
of victory': IN is frequently  
used in EL. E. where MN. E.  
requires 'on,' cp. "that our  
armies joyn not in a hot day"  
2Hen.4, 1.2.234, and "in the  
day of battell" Rich.3 IV.  
4.188. ¶ 3 PERFECT'ST,  
'most accurate,' cp. "a per-  
fect guesse" 2Hen.4 III.1.88.  
REPORT may be a reference  
to inquiries that Macbeth has  
instituted; but if THE is  
equivalent to 'their,' and RE-  
PORT has its common EL.  
meaning, 'a statement of  
facts,' the superlative might  
have its EL. absolute signifi-  
cation and the whole phrase  
mean 'their very accurate  
statements'; cp. "observe his  
reports for me," i.e. 'what he  
says' (but Parroles is speak-  
ing), All's W. II.1.46, and  
"Sonne to the Queene after  
his owne report," i.e. 'ac-

cording to his own statement' Cym. IV.2.119; cp., too, Cooper, "*nuntiatio*, a report, a shewing or declaring." The superlative ending was affixed to polysyllabic words in M.E. and e.N.E., and EL. superlatives were commonly contracted as here: e.g. "fertilst soyle" Drayton, 'Harmony of Church,' Per. Soc., p. 8; "welcomst" Jonson, 'Silent Woman,' 1640, p. 462. ¶ 6 WHILES is an EL. form of 'while.' RAPT IN is 'carried away by,' cp. 1.3.142. ¶ 7 MISSIVES, 'messengers,' cp. "did gibe my misive out of audience" Ant.&Cl. II.2.74. ALL-HAILE, cp. Cotgrave, "*saluer*, to salute, greet, all-haile," and Florio, "*salutare*, to salute, to greet, to al-haile" (latter quotation in Cl. Pr.). ¶ 9 The notion in REFERR'D seems to be that of appealing his claim to higher power: cp. Kersey, Dict., 1708, "refer, to leave to ones judgment or determination"; and COM-MING ON looks as if it related to the advent of a judge, a meaning which the phrase seems to have in Hen.5 1.2.289, "But this lyes all within the wil of God, To whom I do appeale, and in whose name, Tel you the Dolphin, I am comming on, To venge me as I may." But as this meaning is not supported by N.E.D. we shall have to take COM-MING ON in its sense of 'maturing'—'to the fulness of time.' ¶ 12 DELIVER, 'tell,' 'communicate,' cp. "her verie words Didst thou deliver to me" Err. II.2.166. ¶ 13 LOOSE is an EL. spelling for 'lose,' cp. "loosing his verdure" Two Gent. 1.1.49, and "This deceit looses the name of craft" Merry W. V.5.239. ('Loose' and 'lose' were identical in M.E.; MN.E. 'loose' with the voiceless s is due to the influence of the adjective.) THE DUES is 'thy dues,' i.e. 'thy rightful share in the joy of my success.' The spirit of Macbeth's letter bespeaks an intimate relation between him and his wife, of

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

which Shakspeare gives us glimpses all through the early part of the play. ¶ 17 FEARE in EL. E. means 'to fear for,' 'be concerned about,' cp. Ham. IV. 5. 122, where the king says, "Do not feare our person: There 's such diuinity doth hedge a king," etc. NATURE has here its usual EL. meaning of 'character,' cp. I. 3. 137. ¶ 18 O' TH', cp. note to I. 3. 7. HUMANE is EL. spelling for 'human'; 'húman' and 'humáne' is a stress-distinction later than Shakspeare. The expressions "milke of humane kindnesse" and "sweet milke of concord" IV. 3. 98 were in EL. E. striking metaphors, the first of which has become familiar idiom. Goneril accuses Albany of "milky gentlenesse" and "harmefull mildnesse" in Lear I. 4. 364 ff. (cited by Cl. Pr.). ¶ 19 TO CATCH THE NEEREST WAY is 'to see the shortest road to the fulfilment of your ambition,' cp. "He conceiveth (catcheth) all things, who desireth to do it" Comenius, 'Janua Linguarum' 12. WOULD'ST here and in v. 21 preserves the original independent meaning of the auxiliary, 'desirest.' ¶ 21 ILLNESSE is EL. E. for 'unscrupulousness,' cp. N. E. D. I. EL. HIGH denotes earnestness of any feeling, cp. "A high hope for a low heaven" L. L. L. I. 1. 196 and MN. E. "high hopes." Here HIGHLY seems to refer to the intensity of Macbeth's ambition, cp. N. E. D. 5. ¶ 22 HOLILY frequently occurs in EL. E. with the meaning 'in a scrupulous way,' cp. N. E. D. 2. Vv. 22-24 have occasioned great difficulty to Shakspeare editors. There are no quotation-marks in the Folio and the verse division is Thould'st . . cryes, Thus . . it, And . . doe. None of the emendations and explanations clears away the difficulty, which seems to lie in an EL. ἀπὸ κοινοῦ construction by which CRYES is first used in its sense of 'exclaiming' and is then understood in its other EL. sense of 'demanding' with a direct object after it. This latter sense we have in Oth. I. 3. 277, "Th' affaire cries hast." Such syntax is found also in Merch. II. 4. 30, "she hath directed How I shall take her from her Father's house, [sc. directed in the sense of 'communicated,' N. E. D. 2 b] What gold and jewels she is furnisht with, What pages suite she hath in readinesse," and in Pericles, Prol.,

## ACT I

## SCENE V

16-31

Glamys thou art, and Cawdor, and shalt be  
What thou art promis'd: yet doe I feare thy  
nature;

It is too full o' th' milke of humane kindnesse  
To catch the neerest way. Thou would'st  
be great;

Art not without ambition, but without  
The illnesse should attend it. What thou  
would'st highly,

That would'st thou holily: would'st not play  
false,

And yet would'st wrongly winne. Thould'st  
have, great Glamys,

That which cryes "Thus thou must doe" if  
thou have it,

And that which rather thou do'st feare to doe  
Then wishest should be undone. High thee  
hither,

That I may powre my spirits in thine eare,  
And chastise with the valour of my tongue  
All that impeides thee from the golden round  
Which fate and metaphysicall ayde doth  
seeme

To have thee crown'd withall.

ENTER MESSENGER

What is your tidings?

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

"to keep [*i.e.* retain] her still and [*sc.* keep in the sense of 'hold'] men in awe." The meaning, then, is 'Thould'st have, great Glamis, that which cries "Thus must thou do," etc., . . and requires that which thou,' etc. ¶26 TO BE UNDONE means 'not to be done,' cp. "un-provokes," 'fails to provoke,' 11.3.32; this is a frequent signification of the prefix in EL.E. HIGH is not a misprint for "hie," 'to hasten,' due to confusion of the verb with the adjective, but a regular EL.E. spelling of the word; cp. M.E. "highen." Lady Macbeth's shrewd and clear-cut analysis of her husband's character has already been foreshadowed in Macbeth's own words, 1.4.52, "let that bee which the eye feares, when it is done, to see." His weakness comes to the fore again in 1.7.16 ff., and follows him like a Nemesis all through the play, lashing him with whips of steel. She sums it up in the words "humane kindnesse"—a strain of sentimentality, a touch of human sympathy that makes him kin with his victim. Like many a brave man, he is both superstitious and sentimental. He can shed blood relentlessly in the heat of battle and action, but cold-blooded murder he balks at. Without her instigation he never would have 'screwed his courage to the sticking-point.' ¶27 SPIRITS, 'vigor,' 'energy,' cp. "Faire daughter you doe draw my spirits from me, With new lamenting ancient over-sights" 2Hen.4 11.3.46. ¶28 CHASTISE is stressed on the first syllable in EL.E., cp. note on the word in N.E.D. It has also the connotation of putting down rebellion, N.E.D.3 b. ¶29 IMPEIDES seems to be a spelling of "impede" based on the analogy of "receive," etc.; so "theis," "feitures," "retreit," etc., occur frequently in EL.E. ROUND is one of the words for

## ACT I SCENE V 32-39

MESSANGER

The king comes here to-night.

LADY MACBETH

Thou 'rt mad to say it.

Is not thy master with him? who, wer 't so,  
Would have inform'd for preparation.

MESSANGER

So please you, it is true: our thane is coming:

One of my fellowes had the speed of him;  
Who almost dead for breath, had scarcely  
more

Then would make up his message.

LADY MACBETH

Give him tending;

He brings great newes.

EXIT MESSENGER

outstrippeth (gets the start of) the swift" Comenius, 'Janua' 809. In both of these idioms the preposition retains some of its M.E. connotation 'away from.' ¶37 WHO is the connective relative, 'and almost dead for breath, he had,' cp. 1.2.21. ¶38 TENDING, 'attention,' cp. Cooper's Thesaurus, "*curatio*, diligent tending," and "tend" in v. 42.

'circle' in M.E. and e.N.E.; Shakspeare frequently uses it for 'crown'; cp. IV.1.88 and "With rounds of waxen tapers on their heads" Merry W. IV.4.50, and Coles, "a round, *orbis*." ¶30 METAPHYSICALL is EL.E. for 'supernatural,' cp. Cotgrave, "*supernaturel*, supernaturall, metaphisicall, above nature." DOTH SEEME TO is EL.E. for 'is about to,' cp. 1.2.27 and note. ¶31 WITHALL, 'with,' cp. note to 1.3.57. EL. TIDINGS, like MN. "news," is often singular.

¶32 THOU'RT MAD TO SAY IT: cp. "I shall be hated to report it" Wint. T. III.2.144. ¶34 INFORM'D is EL.E. for 'given directions,' cp. N.E.D. 4 c. In PREPARATION the suffix *-tion* is dissyllabic, cp. 1.2.18, and the verse is therefore quite normal. ¶36 HAD THE SPEED OF: a similar phrase is found in "the slow



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶ 39 RAVEN, like 'heaven,' 'seven,' and participles in -en, is often monosyllabic in e.N.E. It was a popular superstition that the croaking of a raven was always an omen of ill and at times foreboded death; cp. Brand's Popular Antiquities, III. 210, 211, and especially the quotation from Poole's Parnassus, 1657, "The om'nous raven with a dismal chear, Through his hoarse beak of following horror tells." Peele, 'David and Bethsabe,' 1599, Chor. to Sc. III, also refers to this popular belief. Shakspeare again implies it in Oth.IV.1.21 and 2Hen.6 III.2.40. ¶ 40 ENTERANCE (the Folio prints "entrance") is also trisyllabic in Per.II.3.64 and in Faerie Queene I.8.34; it is often spelled "enterance" in EL. prose. In e.N.E. the vowel sound which developed out of *r* frequently makes a distinct syllable, cp. "childeren" IV.3.177, "remembrance" III.2.30, "prayers" II.2.25; we still have "fire," "power," and "hour" as dissyllables in MN.E. ¶ 41 The lacking impulse after the cæsura is supplied by the pause before COME. SPIRITS is often monosyllabic in EL.E., 'sprites' (whence MN.E. 'sprightly'),

and is probably so here, for the rhythm is smoother if v. 41 ends in a rising wave. ¶ 42 MORTALL THOUGHTS is not 'human thinking' but 'deadly purposes'; cp. note to I.3.139. These 'devilish spirits of murder' Shakspeare refers to in 2Hen.6 IV.7.80. ¶ 43 TO TH' TOE is "to the toe" in FO. I; but the printer probably neglected to mark the elision, cp. I.1.5 note. The whole expression is idiomatic in EL.E., cp. "from the top to the toe, *a capite ad calcem usque*" Baret, 'Alvearie'; and TOPFULL, 'brimful,' is likewise a usual word, cp. "Topfull with Faith" Taylor, Works, Sp. Soc., II. 230. ¶ 44 MAKE THICK MY BLOOD: cp. "if that surly spirit melancholy Had bak'd thy bloud and made it heavy thicke, Which else runnes tickling up and downe the veines" John III.3.42; see also Wint. T. I.2.171 and Ham. I.5.70. ¶ 45 ACCESSE frequently has its M.E. stress "ac-cesse" in e.N.E., cp. e.g. "get swift accesse" Jonson, 'Sejanus' II.2. REMORSE does not here correspond to the MN.E. word, but connotes the idea 'compassion'; cp. "We know your tendernes of heart, And gentle, kinde, effeminate [i.e. womanly] remorse" Rich.3 III.7.210, and "Not doubting but to finde such kinde remorse As naturally you are enclined

ACT I

SCENE V

39-55

The raven himselfe is hoarse  
That croakes the fatall enterance of Duncan  
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits  
That tend on mortall thoughts, unsex me  
here,

And fill me, from the crowne to th' toe, top-  
full

Of direst crueltie! make thick my blood,  
Stop up th' accesse and passage to remorse,  
That no compunctious visitings of nature  
Shake my fell purpose, nor keepe peace be-  
tweene

Th' effect and hit. Come to my woman's  
breasts,

And take my milke for gall, you murth'ring  
ministers,

Where-ever in your sightlesse substances  
You wait on nature's mischiefe! Come, thick  
night,

And pall thee in the dunnest smoake of hell,  
That my keene knife see not the wound it  
makes,

Nor heaven peepe through the blanket of  
the darke,

To cry 'Hold, hold!'



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

to" 'Faire Em' II. I. 132. ¶46 COMPUNCTIOUS was a rare word in Shakspeare's time, if, indeed, not coined by Shakspeare himself. NATURE, 'natural feeling,' 'sympathy,' cp. "You, brother mine, that entertaine ambition, Expell'd remorse and nature" Temp. V. I. 75. It is only in the light of Shakspeare's psychology in I. 3. 139 that this picture of Lady Macbeth's mind becomes clear. In ¶48 HIT (the M.E. form corresponding to MN.E. 'it' which occasionally appears in e.N.E. as here) refers to "nature," and TH' EFFECT is equivalent to MN.E. 'its accomplishment,' cp. N.E.D. 7, and "Could have attained th' effect of your owne purpose" Meas. II. I. 13. Lady Macbeth deliberately invokes the devils of murder to forestall the "shaking" of her fell purpose and the "hostilitie and civill tumult" between her conscience and Duncan's death—to use the phraseology of John IV. 2. 245—by blocking up all avenues to pity and compassion. ¶47 NOR KEEPE PEACE, therefore, is tantamount to 'and make war' between my "thought" and the "mortal instruments" which are to execute it; cp. the notion of "single peace" in the passage from Ben Jonson above, and "In absence of her knight the lady noway could Keepe trewce between her greefes and her, though nere so fayne she would . . . Yet did her face disclose the passions of her hart" Brooke's *Romeus and Juliet*, ed. 1562, vv. 1781 ff. (quoted in part by Malone), where we have again the 'microcosmic' psychology. The conscienceless strength of Lady Macbeth is thus luridly contrasted with her husband's 'infirmitie of purpose': only one 'visiting of nature' does she show in II. 2. 13, "Had he not resembled My father as he slept, I had not 't," and she refers to this with an implied apology for a momentary weakness. The fact that Lady Macbeth had been a mother, cp. I. 7. 54, adds more horror to her imprecation. ¶49 TAKE is explained by Schmidt as referring to malignant supernatural influences, as in "he blasts the tree and takes the cattle" Merry W. IV. 4. 32, and in "No faierie takes" Ham. I. I. 163; but the syntax does not permit such an interpretation; the idiom is TAKE FOR, not "take"; TAKE FOR in the sense of 'turn into' is not English idiom; 'take away my milk and put gall in its place' is a far-fetched use of "take" in the sense of 'exchange.' It is better to understand the word in its usual sense of 'receive.' GALL, 'poison,' 'venom,' cp. "Poyson be their drinke! Gall, worse then gall the daintiest that they taste" 2Hen. 6 III. 2. 322. In EL. psychology the gall was the seat of the bitter and violent passions of hatred and revenge, cp. N.E.D. 3. So Hamlet, using the concrete for the abstract, says he 'lacks gall to make tyrannous violence bitter' Ham. II. 2. 605. Minshew s. v. 'gall' says "it is the humor which nourishes wrath," and this seems to be Lady Macbeth's notion here, carrying out the idea in v. 42, "unsex me here, and fill me . . . topfull of direst crueltie!" MINISTERS in e.N.E. usage denoted the "instruments of darknesse" as well as "ministers of grace"; cp. Titus V. 2. 61, where Murder and Rapine are spoken of as "ministers," and Rich. 3 I. 2. 46, "dreadfull minister of hell." Burton, 'Anat. of Mel.,' 1621, speaks of the "devil and his ministers." The clipped form of the word, 'min'sters,' is probably intended here. ¶50 SIGHTLESSE is a common EL. synonym of 'invisible'; it is used again in I. 7. 23. One of the nine kinds of bad spirits mentioned by Burton, I. ii. 1. 2, instigates to fury; another is 'those vessels of anger inventors of all mischief' (cp. v. 51). 'These unclean spirits go in and out of our bodies as bees do in a hive and so provoke and tempt us as they perceive our temperature [i.e. temperament] inclined of itself and most apt to be deluded.' They are 'corporeal and have aerial bodies'; 'the air is not so full of flies in summer as it is at all times of invisible devils.' These devils or spirits in EL. metaphysics, taking possession of the body and working upon its 'humours,' produced all those forms of insanity and mental disorder which were termed melancholy. Shakspeare's psychology, while it is not a bald transcription of it, nevertheless reflects the doctrine in a general way, and Macbeth's soul "blasted with extasy" and Lady Macbeth's "mind diseased" are each conceived in the terms of its philosophy. They are both 'possessed of devils,' Macbeth through his allowing the witches to help on his ambition, Lady Macbeth through the obsession of the unclean spirits which she invokes to her aid. The one passively submits to the supernatural control, the other actively invokes it. The ruin of the man's cankered soul is gradual, opposed always by

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

resisting forces of his character; the ruin of the woman's "mind diseased" swiftly culminates in insanity and self-destruction. ¶ 52 PALL THEE, 'cloak thyself'; Shakspeare seems to have made the verb from the noun, cp. Cooper, "*palliolatim*, clad in a mantle, pall, or robe." DUNNEST, 'murkiest,' cp. N.E.D. and Coles, "*obfuscus*, black, dark, dun." Peele has a somewhat similar phrase in 'David and Bethsabe, X. II, "O would my breath were made the smoke of hell!" ¶ 53 Lady Macbeth here intends herself to commit the murder; Macbeth speaks of doing it in 1.7.16; he has sworn to do it in 1.7.58; both together are to perform it in 1.7.69; in 11.2.13 Lady Macbeth tries and fails; finally Macbeth does the deed in 11.2.15. Thus by keeping vague the outlines of the act does Shakspeare intensify the horror of its circumstances. ¶ 54 Such figures as BLANKET OF THE DARKE were common in EL. E., cp. "Come seeling night, Skarfe up the tender eye of pittifull day" 111.2.46. A similar association of ideas occurs in Drayton's Barrons Warres, 111.17.18, ed. 1605, "The sullen night hath her blacke curtaines spread, Lowring [i.e. scowling because] the day had tarried up so long, Whose faire eyes closing softly [in MN. E. sc. 'she'] steales to bed when all the heavens with duskie clowdes are hung . . . The glimmering lights, like sentinels in warre, Behind the clowdes stand craftily to pry And through false loope-holes looking from afarre To see him skirmish with his desteny." The first verse was cited by Malone in its earlier form, ed. 1596, "The sullen night in mistie rugges [i.e. blanket] is wrapp'd"; Cl. Pr. also adds Drayton's notion of night as "heaven's black nightgowne." The homely figure was taken exception to by Coleridge, and various foolish emendations, 'blackness,' 'blankness,' 'blank-height,' 'blankest,' etc., have been proposed. But one who will criticize such figures in Shakspeare shows little knowledge of Elizabethan literature. It has also been suggested that "blanket" refers to the 'curtain of a theatre' with 'heaven' in its EL. sense of 'roof of the stage'; but the N.E.D. records no such usage of the word 'blanket.' The associative interests of the earlier passages, "milk," "woman's breasts," suggest motherhood — cp. also 1.7.54 ff. — and this culminating figure brings to the mind the picture of a terror-stricken child peering over the edge of his blanket into the awful gloom of night. Rob the context of these associations and the marvellous power of the thought is gone from it. We have much to thank Shakspeare scholarship for, but surely its cavilling at this passage is little to its credit.

¶ 58 IGNORANT is probably used here, as in Wint. T. 1.2.397, with the sense of 'keeping one in ignorance' (cp. N.E.D. s. v. 3 b): "If you know ought . . . imprison't not In ignorant conchelement."

The rhythm of the verse, like that of IV.3.28, lacks a stressed impulse after PRESENT, if "ign'rant" is so syncopated: Pope supplied "time" after PRESENT to fill the measure, preferring a limping verse to an 'incorrect' one; Lettsom proposed "e'en now" — there is some ground for this, cp. I.4.15, IV.1.148, IV.3.121, V.2.10; Abbott reads "fe-el," but while the development of an extra syllable out of *r* is a general EL. phenomenon not pecu-

## ACT I SCENE V 55-61

ENTER MACBETH

Great Glamys! worthy Cawdor!  
Greater then both, by the all-haile hereafter!  
Thy letters have transported me beyond  
This ignorant present, and I feele now  
The future in the instant.

MACBETH

My dearest love,  
Duncan comes here to night.

LADY MACBETH

And when goes hence?

MACBETH

To morrow, as he purposes.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

liar to prosody, and has had its due effect on MN.E., there is no evidence for *l* having thus produced an extra syllable after *e* in EL.E. The verse is probably correct as it stands. IN THE INSTANT, 'on the instant,' is an EL. phrase meaning 'at this moment'; cp.

ACT I SCENE V 61-74

LADY MACBETH

O never,

Shall sunne that morrow see!

Your face, my thane, is as a booke where men  
May reade strange matters. To beguile the  
time,

Looke like the time; beare welcome in your  
eye,

Your hand, your tongue: looke like th' inno-  
cent flower,

But be the serpent under 't. He that's com-  
ming

Must be provided for: and you shall put  
This night's great businesse into my dispatch,  
Which shall to all our nights and dayes to come  
Give solely soveraigne sway and masterdome.

MACBETH

We will speake further.

LADY MACBETH

Onely looke up cleare;

To alter favor ever is to feare:

Leave all the rest to me.

EXEUNT

N.E.D. s. v. 3 and "in the in-  
stant came The fiery Tibalt"  
Rom.&Jul.1.1.115. ¶ 60 The  
rhythm of Lady Macbeth's  
words, "And when goes  
hence?" aptly reflects the  
gravity of her question.

¶ 63 Macbeth's appalling  
realization of the significance  
of "O never shall sun that  
morrow see"—MORROW also  
means 'morning' in EL.E.—  
is reflected in Lady Macbeth's  
words. ¶ 64 STRANGE, 'un-  
usual'; cp. "Looke like the  
time" v. 65. MATTERS,  
'subject matter,' cp. "I read  
in 's looks Matter against  
me" Hen.8.1.1.125, and "Was  
ever booke containing such  
vile matter So fairely bound?"  
[i.e. as Romeo's beauty]  
Rom.&Jul. III. 2. 83. BE-  
GUILE THE TIME, 'deceive  
the world'; EL.E. frequently  
uses THE TIME in the sense  
of 'men and things about one,'  
'the world,' 'the times'; cp.  
"he did serve the time cun-  
ningly, *omnium horarum ho-  
minem se agebat*" Phr. Gen.  
s.v. 'time.' The word occurs  
again in this sense in 1.7.81,  
"Mock the time," and in IV.  
3.72, "the time you may so  
hoodwinke." The editors of

FO. I seem to have misunderstood the word BEGUILE, and punctuate with comma after MATTERS and period after TIME. ¶ 65 THE TIME here means 'the moment,' and re-  
fers to the welcoming of Duncan, cp. "it spoyles the pleasure of the time," i.e. the feast,  
III.4.98. Shakspeare is fond of thus varying the significance of a word by its context.  
¶ 66 TH' INNOCENT places stress on the second syllable of the word; but "the inn'cent,"  
a usual EL. contraction (cp. II.2.36), makes equally good rhythm. The sense of the word  
seems to be 'innocuous,' 'harmless.' The earliest quotation in N.E.D. 5 for this meaning  
is dated 1662, but in Baret's Alvearie "innocent" is glossed "*innocuus*," and "inno-  
cently," "*innoxie*"; so likewise in Phr. Gen. ¶ 68 Lady Macbeth's PROVIDED FOR sug-  
gests a grim irony. ¶ 69 DISPATCH is 'management,' cp. N.E.D. 5 b. ¶ 72 SPEAKE,  
'confer,' cp. "Have you spoke" All's W. V. 3.28. CLEARE is an adverb meaning 'frankly,'  
cp. N.E.D. 'clearly,' 7. In M.E. and O.E. the usual adverb suffix was -e: when this was  
lost in late M.E. (l.M.E.) and e.N.E. monosyllabic adverbs and adjectives became iden-



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

tical in form. ¶73 FAVOR is EL.E. for 'face,' 'countenance,' cp. N.E.D. 9 b. TO FEARE seems to mean 'to give cause for alarm,' cp. N.E.D. I (though not illustrated in this intransitive sense).

## SCENE VI: BEFORE MACBETH'S CASTLE HOBOYES AND TORCHES

ENTER KING MALCOLME DONALBAIN BANQUO LENOX  
MACDUFF ROSSE ANGUS AND ATTENDANTS

I-10

KING

Duncan arrives in the evening, hence the TORCHES of the stage direction, cp. I. 7. 25. HOBOYES is the English spelling of 'hautboy': the word was used in EL.E. for the player of the oboe as well as for the instrument itself. So TORCH in EL. scene directions is usually the 'bearer of a torch' or 'link-boy.' ¶I SEAT, 'site'; cp. Jonson, 'Poetaster' II. I, "You are most delicately seated here . . an excellent ayre"; Burton, 'Anat. of Mel.' I.ii. 2. 5, "How can they be excused that have a delicious seat, a pleasant air and all that nature can afford . . ?" AYRE is somewhat generally used in EL.E. for 'climate.' In FO. I THE AYRE is part of v. 2. ¶3 It is not necessary to suppose that GENTLE is proleptically used



HIS castle hath a pleasant seat;  
the ayre  
Nimbly and sweetly recommends  
it selfe  
Unto our gentle senses.

BANQUO

This guest of summer,  
The temple-haunting marlet, does approve  
By his lov'd mansionry that th' heaven's breath  
Smells wooingly here: no jutty, frieze,  
Buttrice, nor coigne of vantage, but this bird  
Hath made his pendant bed and procreant  
cradle;  
Where they most breed and haunt, I have  
observ'd  
The ayre is delicate.

ENTER LADY MACBETH

for 'our senses made gentle by the air,' as it is usually understood; Duncan merely says that his senses, gentled and tamed by age (cp. N.E.D. 8), ill endure a rough climate. This suggestion of the peace and quietness of his mind is tragically contrasted with I. 5. 40 ff. It is well borne out, too, by the easy-flowing rhythm of the passage, with its freedom from reversals and its lack of tensely stressed syllables. The notion of the evening quiet is added to by the suggestion of the swallows which flit in and out the eaves, with a further suggestion of the holy time in the epithet "temple-haunting." It is the flitting martin, summer's guest, not the boding raven, that welcomes Duncan. ¶4 MARLET—the "Barlet" of FO. I is obviously a misprint—is an EL. form of 'martlet' (O. FR. *merlette*), cp. Skinner, "marlet quasi martlet"; it is used for 'swift' or 'swallow.' Minsheu says "they are called Martlets or Martens, because they come unto us about the end of March and goe away before s. Marten's day, that is about the twelfth of November, by reason of cold"; the same fanciful etymology is found in Junius's Etymo-



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

logicon—and repeated, alas, in modern dictionaries: hence Shakspeare's GUEST OF SUMMER. APPROVE is 'prove,' 'show,' cp. N.E.D. I. ¶5 LOV'D is an instance of the suffix -ed (which, like the past participle ending, was often syncopated) in its EL. sense of 'full of,' 'characterized by,' and the word is an adjective and corresponds to MN.E. 'loving,' not 'loved.' The FO. reads "masonry," for which Pope conjectured "masonry" and Theobald MANSIONRY. Either word makes fitting sense. 'Masonry' in EL.E. connotes the art of putting together rubble or brick with plaster as well as that of hewing and placing stones; cp. Cooper, "*cæmentarius*, a dauber, a parzetter, a rough mason": in Minsheu and Skinner *mason* is glossed "*cæmentarius*"; so also in Baret's *Alvearie*. The work of the martin could therefore be called "masonry"; cp. "the artificiall [i.e. skilful] nest-composing swallow" Robert Chester's *Love's Martyr*, 1601 (ed. Grosart), p. 122. On the other hand, *mansionarium* in Mediæval Latin (cp. Du Cange s.v.) denotes the residence of a canon in a cathedral: and the O.FR. and M.E. form of this word would have been *mansionrie*; though the word is not found in O.FR. Shakspeare may have known it, nevertheless, and most beautifully used it here; cp. "temple-haunting": *f* and *fi* were single types in EL. typography, and, like *f* and *fi* or *fl*, are easily confused in printing. But MANSIONRY may simply mean 'house-building.' ¶6 SMELLS seems in EL.E. to have meant 'breathes upon,' cp. Florio, "*oreggiare*, to breathe, to blow as aire or winde, to sent, or smell pleasantly"; cp., too, "The ayre breathes upon us here most sweetly" Temp. II. I. 46. WOOLINGLY: in EL. present participles of verbs ending in a long vowel, like 'doing,' 'being,' etc., the suffix is frequently taken with the preceding vowel to make a single syllable. JUTTY: cp. Cotgrave, "*soupendue* . . juttie, or part of a building that juttieth beyond or leaneth over the rest." ¶9 FO. I reads "must" for MOST ("most" is a M.E. form of "must"), with comma after CRADLE and colon after HAUNT. HAUNT, 'resort habitually,' cp. N.E.D. 7. ¶10 DELICATE, 'pleasant,' 'delightful,' cp. N.E.D. I a.

## ACT I SCENE VI 10-20

KING

See, see, our honor'd hostesse!

The love that followes us sometime is our trouble,

Which still we thanke as love. Herein I teach you

How you shall bid God-eyld us for your paines,  
And thanke us for your trouble.

LADY MACBETH

All our service

In every point twice done, and then done double,

Were poore and single businesse to contend

Against those honors deepe and broad where-with

Your majestie loades our house: for those of old,

And the late dignities heap'd up to them,  
We rest your ermites.

¶11 THAT FOLLOWES US, i.e. is the concomitant of kingship; cp. "the libertie that followes our places" Hen.5 V. 2. 297. SOMETIME is a common EL. E. form of 'sometimes.' ¶12 STILL, 'always.' AS, 'as being,' 'because it is,' cp. "as his host" i.e. in that I am his host, I. 7. 14. The momentary change to "I" gives Duncan's words a personal turn. TEACH has here its EL. sense of 'teaching by example,' cp. I. 7. 8. ¶13 SHALL BID GOD-EYLD US, 'shall pray God reward us,' with BID in its e. N. E. sense of 'ask,' 'pray,' and GOD-EYLD an

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

EL. phrase, like MN.E. 'good-bye,' composed of 'God' and 'yeld,' i.e. reward; cp. N.E.D. 'God,' 8, and A.Y.L. III.3.76. ¶16 SINGLE in EL.E. often means 'trivial,' 'trifling,' cp. "He utters such single matter in so infantly a voice" Fletcher, 'Queen of Corinth' III.1 (Cent. Dict.), and Jonson, 'Every Man out of his Humour' II.3: "Mit. But he might have altered the shape of his argument and explicated 'hem better in single scenes. Cor. That had been single indeed." BUSINESSSE has probably its EL. signification of 'care,' 'attention,' cp. N.E.D. 6; it seems to be the notion of loving attention to Duncan's comfort that Lady Macbeth has in mind. ¶17 DEEPE, 'weighty,' 'important,' cp. I.4.7 and N.E.D. 7 b. ¶18 MAJESTIE is prosodically equivalent to a dissyllable here, as it is in III.4.2. The verse division of FO. I is Against . . broad, Wherewith . . house, For . . dignities, Heap'd . . ermites. OF OLD is an EL. phrase meaning 'formerly'; cp. "even for that our love of old" Cæs. V.5.27, and Phr. Gen., "He was my tutor of old, *olim mihi pædagogus erat*." ¶19 TO, 'in addition to,' cp. I.2.10. ¶20 REST, 'remain,' cp. I Hen.6 V.5.95. ERMITES is the EL. spelling of 'hermits,' and the word is here used in the sense of 'beadsmen,' N.E.D.2 c. Steevens cites a similar passage from 'Arden of Feversham' III.6.120: "God save your honour; I am your bedesman bound to pray for you."

Lady Macbeth's compliment has reference to Duncan's 'You shall pray God's blessing on my head,' v.13; she replies, 'we will spend our lives praying for you.' The difference between the easy flow of Duncan's words and the tortuous rhythm of Lady Macbeth's is worth noting.

¶21 COURST, 'chased,' 'pursued.' AT THE HEELES, cp. "follow him at foote" Ham. IV.3.56. ¶22 TO BE is EL. syntax for 'of being.' APURVEYOR—"cater" is an EL. synonym of the word—was, according to Cowel's Law Dictionary (ed. 1684), "an officer of the King or Queen, or other great personage, that providith corn and other victual for their house." Duncan in v.24 applies it to the preparation of a loving reception for Macbeth. The word is stressed on the first and third syllables,

cp. EL. E. 'pûrsue,' "In all their drifts and counsellis pursue profit," Jonson, 'Sejanus' III.2. ¶23 HOLP is the M.E. strong form of the verb—it is still used in the Authorized Version—which the weak form 'helped' had not yet supplanted in E.N.E. Both forms occur in Shakspeare, cp. Schmidt s.v. ¶24 For TO HIS "to 's" was probably intended by Shakspeare. In the Epilogue to Jonson's Poetaster we have "t' himself"; in Drayton's Barrons Warres II.46.7, "T' an open smile convert"; so "t' our" III.28.6 and "unt' her," Sidney, 'Arcadia,' ed. 1590, 243 b. ¶26 The first THEIRS is EL. E. for 'their family and retinue'; cp. "points at them for his" IV.1.124, and "I can-

## ACT I

## SCENE VI

20—28

### KING

Where's the Thane of Cawdor?  
We courtst him at the heeles, and had a purpose  
To be his purveyor: but he rides well,  
And his great love, sharpe as his spurre, hath  
holp him  
To his home before us. Faire and noble  
hostesse,  
We are your guest to night.

### LADY MACBETH

Your servants ever  
Have theirs, themselves, and what is theirs,  
in compt,  
To make their audit at your highnesse pleasure,  
Still to returne your owne.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

not perswade myself that you will either forget or neglect this point concerning the institution of yours" Florio's Montaigne, I. 25; the second THEIRS has its MN. sense of 'their property.' HAVE . . IN COMPT (an EL. form of 'account,' cp. N. E. D. s.v.) seems to mean 'to hold subject to account.' ¶ 27 HIGHNESSE is an instance of the e. N. E. inflectionless genitive as in I. 4. 6, 23.

ACT I SCENE VI 28-31

KING

Give me your hand;  
Conduct me to mine host: we love him highly,  
And shall continue our graces towards him.  
By your leave, hostesse.

¶ 28 STILL has here its EL. sense of 'always,' 'in order always to return to you what is yours.'

EXEUNT

¶ 29 HIGHLY, 'earnestly,' cp. I. 5. 21. ¶ 30 There is probably intended a union of the last syllable of CONTINUE (it had not yet become *iu*, but was still *u* in EL. E.) and the first syllable of OUR. FO. I

has a comma before 'our.' ¶ 31 BY YOUR LEAVE in Merry W. III. 2. 28 and Merch. II. 4. 15 is a ceremonious expression of farewell: but here it seems to mean 'Permit me, madam' and to refer to some action, like his kissing Lady Macbeth's hand, or his preceding or following her through the door.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SCENE VII

Macbeth's welcome of Duncan is left to the imagination. The banquet with which he entertains his royal guest is likewise unrepresented. Macbeth, unable longer to endure the strain, has escaped from the banqueting-room. The court ringing with his praises has made him for the first time realize what the court really is. Not only the king must be murdered, but the suspicions of Rosse, Donalbaine, Macduff, and the rest must be allayed; Malcolm's legitimate claims must be 'o'erleaped'; Banquo's hopes, based on the witches' prediction, must be nipped in the bud. He thus sees his deed stretch away in its long train of bloody consequences and murderous practice, with possibly himself the victim at the last. Then the thought of the king's gracious meekness—the pity of being forced to sacrifice such an innocent victim on the altar of his ambition—no, it cannot be done. Here Lady Macbeth enters to prick the sides of his intent with taunts of cowardice, and threatens him with the loss of her love and respect on account of his unmanly weakness and faithless vacillation. As each taunt goes home through the weak spots of Macbeth's armour, she seizes her advantage. Her plot comes from the "Historie of Scotland" (Boswell-Stone, p. 27) where Holinshed describes the murder of Duff by Donwald and his wife. The scene is a wonderful illustration of Shakspeare's dramatic power: its words teem with interest; every line is crowded with pictures, association succeeding association in rapid panorama. Some of them are startlingly new: the kingdom of Scotland has been ringing with Macbeth's praises, v. 32; Macbeth is a lover as well as a husband, v. 39; the thought of a violent seizure upon the crown is not for the first time entering Macbeth's mind, v. 51; Lady Macbeth has known the joys of motherhood, v. 54. All of these unite and blend like varying chords in music. The scene opens with the banquet well under way: music in the outer room, servants passing formally into the hall with a new course. The SEWER in EL. households was the chief butler, cp. "Clap me a cleane towell about you, like a sewer; and bare-headed march afore it [i.e. the dinner] with good confidence" Jonson, 'Silent Woman' III. 3 (cited in part by Stevens), and "the gentleman sewer that goeth before the meat to his lord or master's table, vide *maestre sala*" Percivale's Spanish Dictionary, 1623. SERVICE means 'a course,' cp. Ham. IV. 3. 25.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

## SCENE VII: THE COURT OF MACBETH'S CASTLE HOBOYES TORCHES

ENTER A SEWER AND DIVERS SERVANTS WITH DISHES AND  
SERVICE OVER THE STAGE: THEN ENTER MACBETH

I-12

MACBETH

¶ 1 The first DONE here, as in I. 1. 3, corresponds to MN. E. 'over' (cp. N. E. D. 'do,' 8; but in this instance its quotations are not sharply discriminated). In M. E. and E. N. E. the word is used of things running a course as well as of things brought about by a definite agency. The second DONE refers to the accomplishment of the act of murder; DONE in v. 2 refers to the execution of the act. The stress "'t is done" seems awkward in MN. E., but cp. "múst do" I. 5. 24. ¶ 3 TRAMMELL UP, 'net up'; cp. Cotgrave, "*trameau*, a kind of drag-net or draw-net for fish," "*tramail-ler*, to weave, bind, fasten or insnare by thre-fold meshes," "*trameller*, to trammel for larkes." CONSEQUENCE, 'sequel,' 'all that follows'; cp. N. E. D. 2 and "My mind misgives Some consequence . . . shall bitterly begin his fearefull date with this night's revels" Rom. & Jul. I. 4. 106.

CATCH carries out the metaphor of a net. ¶ 4 HIS is the EL. possessive case of 'it,' and refers to "consequence"; cp. the quotation from Rom. & Jul. above. SURCEASE, 'cessation,' cp. "no pulse Shall keepe his native [i.e. natural] progresse, but surcease" Rom. & Jul. IV. 1. 96, and Baret, 'Alvearie,'

"to surcease, or to cease from doing something, *supersedeo*." THAT, as in I. 3. 113, repeats the connective 'if.' BUT THIS BLOW, 'only this blow,' 'this one blow.' ¶ 5 BE-ALL and END-ALL are instances of a form of noun composition common in EL. E., like "mar-all," "spend-all," "do-all." ¶ 6 BUT, 'only.' The BANKE AND SCHOOLE of FO. 1 has given much difficulty to editors, some of whom take it for 'bench and school'; others, following Theobald, assuming a misprint in SCHOOLE for 'shoal,' read 'bank and shoal': but the latter assumption is unnecessary, as EL. *sh* is sometimes spelled *sch*; we have retained one of those *sch*-forms in 'schedule'; in Purchas, 'Pilgrimage,' 2d ed., vol. v, p. 109, "shoole-master" occurs, illustrating the opposite confusion. The E. N. E. spelling of school (of fishes) is "shole." But the oo (=u) in "schoole" would not represent



If it were done when 't is done,  
then 't wer well

It were done quickly: if th' assass-  
ination

Could trammell up the conse-  
quence, and catch

With his surcease successe; that but this blow  
Might be the be-all and the end-all heere,  
But heere, upon this banke and schoole of time,  
Wee 'ld jumpe the life to come. But in these  
cases

We still have judgements heere, that we but  
teach

Bloody instructions, which being taught, re-  
turne

To plague th' inventer. This even-handed  
justice

Commends th' ingredience of our poyson'd  
challice

To our owne lips. Hee 's heere in double  
trust:



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

the EL.E. o in "shoal," whose EL. forms are "shole," "shoale," "shoul." BANKE can be either 'bench' or 'shoal'; cp. Cotgrave, "*banc*, a bench, banke, forme, seat . . .; also a long shole, shelve, or sandie hill in the sea against which the waves doe break." The association of 'teaching' that follows, "teach Bloody instructions," supports the literal reading, and "this banke and schoole of time" might be an EL.E. hendiadys for 'this bench of time's school,' a notion found in Lucr. 995 (cited by Nichols), "Time thou art tutor both to good and bad." The notion of time as the shore of eternity is undoubtedly poetic and Shaksperian withal; and BANKE in EL.E. also means 'beach,' cp. Baret, 'Alvearie,' "the *banke*, properly of the sea and sometimes of any great river," and "I was the other day talking on the sea-banke with certaine Venetians" Oth.IV.1.137. For the whole notion cp. "The tyde of pompe That beates upon the high shore of this world" Hen.5 IV.1.281, and "The varrying shore o'th' world" Ant.&Cl. IV.15.11. It is, and always will be, impossible definitely to decide between the two readings; the reader must make his own choice. ¶7 JUMPE, 'risk,' 'hazard'; cp. "you must . . . jump the after-enquiry on your owne perill" Cym. V.4.188, and "Our fortune lyes Upon this jumpe" Ant.&Cl. III.8.6, and "it putteth the patient to a jumpe or great hazzard" (cited from Holland's Pliny in N.E.D. 6b). ¶8 STILL, 'always.' HAVE JUDGEMENT, i.e. 'receive sentence,' cp. "He confessed the inditement and had judgment to bee hanged" Halle, 'Chronicle' 244 b. THAT has here its common EL. meaning of 'because,' and TEACH connotes 'teaching by example' as in I.6.12, with INSTRUCTION, v. 9, in the sense of 'methods'; cp. "The villanie you teach me I will execute, and it shall goe hard but I will better the instruction" Merch. III.1.74 ff. ¶10 IN-

## ACT I SCENE VII 13-25

First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,  
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,  
Who should against his murtherer shut the  
doore,

Not beare the knife my selfe. Besides, this  
Duncane

Hath borne his faculties so meeke, hath bin  
So cleere in his great office, that his vertues  
Will pleade like angels, trumpet-tongu'd  
against

The deepe damnation of his taking off:  
And pittie, like a naked new-borne-babe,  
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubin hors'd  
Upon the sightlesse curriours of the ayre,  
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,  
That teares shall drowne the winde.

of the king, who is *supra legem* and *habet omnia jura in manu sua*. Cl. Pr. cites Hen.8 I.2.73. MEEKE is an instance of the EL. adverb without the *-ly* suffix. ¶18 CLEERE, 'faultless,' N.E.D. 15; cp. "least my life be cropt to keep you clear" Per. I.1.141. ¶19 AGAINST, according to the punctuation of FO.1, goes with trumpet-tongued and means 'in view of.' ¶20 TAKING OFF, 'death,' cp. III.1.105 and "His speedy taking off" Lear V.1.65

VENTER, 'contriver,' as in "purposes mistooke, Falne on the inventors' heads" Ham. V.2.395. ¶11 COMMENDS, not 'recommends,' but 'offers,' 'presents'; cp. "to her white hand see thou do commend This seal'd-up counsaile" L.L.L. III.1.169, in N.E.D. 1 a. INGREDIENCE is an EL.E. spelling of 'ingredients,' and means 'mixture' N.E.D. 1 a.

¶13 AS, 'because I am,' cp. I.6.12; Macbeth was Duncan's cousin, see I.2.24. ¶17 FACULTIES, 'authority,' is an EL.E. legal term glossed in Cowell's Law Dictionary "a priviledge, or special power granted unto a man by favour, indulgence, and dispensation, to do that which by the common-law he cannot do." It is here applied to the prerogative

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

(cited by Delius). ¶ 21 A similar association occurs in Ham. III. 3. 70: "heart with strings of steele, Be soft as sinewes of the new-borne babe." In the three passages where the murder is realized by the imagination, I. 5. 41 ff., here, and I. 7. 55 ff., its horror is heightened by association with the innocence of childhood. Such associations are implied also in II. 2. 13 and II. 2. 54. ¶ 22 STRIDING, 'mounted on'; cp. "*strideth*, straddleth" Comenius, 'Janua' 944; Coles, "*divarico*, to stride or straddle"; and "I meane to stride your steed" Cor. I. 9. 71. CHERUBIN seems to be intended for a plural; see N. E. D. s.v. for an interesting account of the form development of the word.

¶ 23 SIGHTLESSE, 'invisible,' as in I. 5. 50 q.v. CURRIORS is the EL. spelling of 'couriers.' ¶ 24 BLOW, etc., 'proclaim [N. E. D. 13] the deed in the sight of every one'; cp. N. E. D. 'eye' 4 c and Ham. IV. 4. 6. ¶ 25 Cp. "Where are my teares? Raine to lay this winde, or my heart will be blowne up by the root!" Tro. & Cr. IV. 4. 55.

¶ 26 INTENT is a stronger word in M. E. and EL. E. than in MN. E., cp. "That nys nothyng the entent of myn labour" Chaucer, 'Legend of Goode Women' Prol. 78, and "He thought by their meanes the soner to come to his entent" Berners, 'Froissart' I. cxi, 167 (cited from N. E. D. 6).

¶ 27, 28 The meaning here has been the subject of considerable controversy, and various emendations have been needlessly proposed. To "ORE-LEAPE oneselfe," like "over-shoot ones selfe," "over-study ones selfe," is an idiomatic locution in EL. E.; cp. "he that in this action contrives against his owne nobility in his proper streame ore-flowes himselfe" All's W. IV. 3. 28; we still have 'overreach one's self' with 'over' connoting too violent action for the end in view. The fact that the anacoluthon in v. 28 is followed by a period in FO. I is not very significant, for the printer of the Folio punctuates such anacolutha variously, probably because he did not always understand them: e.g. in III. 1. 128 he uses a double hyphen, in IV. 1. 69 a period, in V. 3. 13 a single short dash. In Lear I. 4. 356 we have in FO. I, "If she sustaine him, and his hundred knights When I have shew'd th' unfinesse. Enter Steward How now Oswald?" Such expedients as "it selle" [i.e. its saddle], "it sete" for IT SELFE, or that of supplying "side" or "one" after OTHER—a German has solved the problem by reading "author" for OTHER (the pronunciation of the two words was similar in EL. E.), and an English editor would read "earth" for OTHER!—are good illustrations of the torture which Shakspeare's text has undergone at the hands of modern editors. Macbeth's sentence would probably have been completed by "side" if Lady Macbeth had not entered. His figure is taken from a common EL. athletic sport, cp. "a vaulter that leapeth up and downe from a horse, *desultor*" Baret, 'Alvearie'; Cooper, "*desultores*, horsemen that in battaile had two horses, and quickly would change horses, and leape from one to an other," "*desultura*, vaulting from one horse to another." It is possible that OTHER means the other horse. Strutt, 'Sports and Pastimes of the People of England' ed. 1898, p. 318, writes: "William Stokes,

## ACT I SCENE VII 25-30

I have no spurre  
To pricke the sides of my intent, but onely  
Vaulting ambition, which ore-leapes it selfe  
And falles on th' other—

ENTER LADY MACBETH  
How now? What newes?

LADY MACBETH  
He has almost supt: why have you left the  
chamber?

MACBETH  
Hath he ask'd for me?

LADY MACBETH  
Know you not he has?

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

a vaulting-master of the seventeenth century, boasted, in a publication called 'The Vaulting Master,' &c., printed at Oxford in 1652, that he had reduced 'vaulting to a method.' In his book are several plates containing different specimens of his practice, which consisted chiefly in leaping over one or more horses, or upon them, sometimes seating himself in the saddle, and sometimes standing upon the same." ¶ 30 ASK'D FOR (sentence stress on FOR), 'inquired about,' 'missed'; cp. "if he aske for me I am ill and gone to bed" Lear III. 3. 17.

ACT I SCENE VII 31-45

MACBETH

We will proceed no further in this businesse:  
He hath honour'd me of late, and I have  
bought

Golden opinions from all sorts of people,  
Which would be worne now in their newest  
glosse,  
Not cast aside so soone.

LADY MACBETH

Was the hope drunke  
Wherein you drest your selfe? Hath it slept  
since?

And wakes it now to looke so greene and pale  
At what it did so freely? From this time  
Such I account thy love. Art thou affear'd  
To be the same in thine owne act and valour  
As thou art in desire? Would'st thou have  
that

Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,  
And live a coward in thine owne esteeme?  
Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would,'  
Like the poore cat i' th' addage?

to warrant our supposing that Lady Macbeth had in mind the notion of 'addressing one's self to a task' as well as 'arraying one's self'; cp. Phr. Gen., "to dress one's self . . . *comparare se*." ¶ 37 GREENE, 'sickly'—a sense the word still bears in MN. E.—and PALE are EL. adverbs. ¶ 38 DID repeats the verb "look on," a use of the auxiliary which was more common in EL. E. than it is now. Not understanding this, one Shakspeare editor reads "eyed," assuming that the word was first corrupted to "dyed" and then to "did"! ¶ 39 Lady Macbeth's SUCH was probably accompanied by a gesture like snapping the fingers. AFFEAR'D, cp. note to I. 3. 96. ¶ 40 Such contrasts as this were common in EL. literature, cp. e.g. "Wise in conceit, in Act a very sot" Drayton, 'Idea' 860, and echo the mediæval distinction between "life active" and "life contemplative." ¶ 42 ORNAMENT OF LIFE, i.e. honour, cp. "Yet know I not whether in all his life he shewed . . . an ornament [i.e. honorable act] so . . . famous" Florio's Montaigne, I. 23. ¶ 45 The proverb referred to is common in e. N. E., cp. Heywood, 'Three Hundred Epigrammes,' ed. 1562, No. 258 (Sp. Soc. reprint, p. 166), "The cat woulde eate fyshe but she wyll not weate her feete," and Ray's

¶ 32 BOUGHT, 'obtained,' cp. "his silver hairs will purchase us a good opinion, And buy mens voyces [i.e. votes] to commend our deeds" Cæs. II. I. 144. ¶ 33 SORTS, 'classes,' the usual EL. E. meaning; cp. "of all sorts enchantingly beloved" A. Y. L. I. 1. 174. ¶ 34 The auxiliaries "will" and "shall" were not sharply distinguished for person as in MN. E. literary idiom, and WOULD here means 'ought to be.' ¶ 35 Cp. "O where hath our intelligence bin drunke? Where hath it slept?" John IV. 2. 116 (cited by Malone). HOPE in EL. E. means 'confidence,' a meaning still retained in Bible English; cp. N. E. D. 2. ¶ 36 Perhaps enough of the original meaning of DRESS was preserved in Shakspeare's time



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

Proverbs, p. 84, "Fain would the cat fish eat, But she's loth her feet to wet."

ACT I

SCENE VII

45-59

MACBETH

¶ 47 For DO, Rowe's correction, FO. I reads "no," which seems to be a misprint; *n* was immediately under *d* in the EL. type-case. Lady Macbeth's reply shows that NONE is equivalent to 'not one,' with 'one' referring to 'man'; cp. "I am none of those that thynke," etc., Florio's Montaigne, I. 25 (Temple reprint of 1632 ed., p. 254), and "Our Lord Jesus Christ regarded not what manner of ones men are" Golding's Translation of Calvin, Galatians, 1574, p. 206. A similar notion is found in Meas. II.4.135 (cited by Steevens), "Be that you are, That is a woman; if you be more, you'r none." BEAST frequently in EL. E. connotes the notion 'not man,' cp. "Unseemely woman in a seeming man, And ill beseeming beast in seeming both" Rom. & Jul. III. 3. 112 (see *ibid.* v. 111), and "for, the philosophers say, amongst all other thinges beware of those persons that followe drunkennes, for they be accompted for nomen because they live a life bestiall" Vicary, 'Anatomie,' 1577, E. E. T. S., p. 15. In EL. E. the word connotes the stupidity and cowardice of a beast as negatives of manly character as well as coarseness and vulgarity; see quotations in N. E. D. under 'beast' 5. The point of Lady Macbeth's taunt here is its implication of unmanly cowardice. ¶ 48 BREAK is EL. E. for 'disclose,' cp. "therefore . . . Katherine, breake thy minde to me in broken English" Hen. 5 V. 2. 265. ¶ 50 In EL. E. the infinitive often corresponds to the MN. E. participial phrase, e.g. "Thou gainest faire to lose thyselfe" Purchas, 'Pilgrimage' V, p. 27, and "O why should Fortune make the citty proud To give that more than is the court allow'd" Drayton, 'Heroical Epistles' p. 69. Lady Macbeth says 'by being more [*i.e.* stronger] now than you were then, you would be so much more the man.' In attempting to make MN. E. sense out of the passage, editors have changed BEAST in v. 47 to "boast," Collier, to "baseness," Bailey, and THE in v. 51 to "than," Hanmer. ¶ 52 ADHERE, 'suit,' 'agree,' 'be fitting,' N. E. D. 4. Shakspeare uses the word in the sense of 'agree' in Merry Wives II. 1. 62; a similar notion with "cohere" occurs in "Had time cohear'd with place or place with wishing" Meas. II. 1. 11. ¶ 53 THAT THEIR FITNESSE, 'their very fitness.' ¶ 54 UNMAKE: Cooper glosses *diffingo* by "To marre: to unmake"; Coles, by

Prythee peace:

I dare do all that may become a man,  
Who dares do more is none.

LADY MACBETH

What beast was't then  
That made you breake this enterprize to me?  
When you durst do it, then you were a man:  
And to be more then what you were, you would  
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor  
place  
Did then adhere, and yet you would make  
both:  
They have made themselves, and that their  
fitnesse now  
Does unmake you. I have given sucke, and  
know  
How tender 't is to love the babe that milkes  
me:  
I would, while it was smyling in my face,  
Have pluckt my nipple from his bonelesse  
gummes,  
And dasht the braines out, had I so sworne  
As you have done to this.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

"unmake, mar, undo." ¶ 55 TENDER, 'exciting to commiseration,' cp. "tender objects," Tro.&Cr. IV. 5. 106. ¶ 58 THE BRAINES corresponds to MN. E. 'its brains'; cp. note on I. 2. 6. SO SWORNE TO: "to swear to" in EL. E. is 'to swear to do'; cp. "you swore to that," i.e. not to see ladies, L. L. L. I. 1. 53. The verse has an extra impulse after the pause. It has been urged that vv. 50-52, 58, 59 refer to a scene or scenes that have been cut out of or lost from the play, since the action which they describe is too important to have been overlooked by Shakspeare; see 'Jahrbuch der deutschen Shakespeare Gesellschaft,' I. 145ff. But this is not likely: we have already seen that in I. 3. 130, where the notion of Duncan's murder is first presented, it is not in the light of a new and unexpected temptation, if Shakspeare's words are clearly understood in their EL. signification. We have seen, too, how Shakspeare is prone to represent only culminating points of interest; that successions of time and place are not connected in his work, sometimes not even logical: e.g. in Ham. I. 1, at the beginning of an apparently continuous dialogue, it is twelve o'clock; thirty-nine lines later it is one. The imagination is not a logical faculty, and often in Shakspeare successions of time and place as in a dream blend into one another to make complete pictures rather than successive series. Here, therefore, there is no real inconsistency: a thought is simply represented in a new light, turning, as it were, a new facet for us to look upon. Indeed, to have represented in action what is here left to

ACT I SCENE VII 59-72

MACBETH

If we should faile?

LADY MACBETH

We faile?

But screw your courage to the sticking place,  
And wee 'le not fayle. When Duncan is  
asleepe,  
Whereto the rather shall his dayes hard  
journey

Soundly invite him, his two chamberlaines  
Will I with wine and wassell so convince,  
That memorie, the warder of the braine,  
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason  
A lymbeck onely: when in swinish sleepe  
Their drenched natures lyes as in a death,  
What cannot you and I performe upon  
Th'unguarded Duncan? What not put upon  
His spungie officers, who shall beare the guilt  
Of our great quell?

the imagination would have interfered with the dramatic interest of the play and have marred its unity, for the murder of Duncan is its starting-point, not its end. Shakspeare magnifies the awful horror of the deed by continually shifting its outlines, else it would find a fixed lodgement in our imaginations and become a vulgar crime. We are never allowed to see its real face: it is a deed of darkness which we see as through a glass darkly.

¶ 59 The Folio punctuation of Lady Macbeth's answer is a question-mark, which modern editors, following Rowe, alter to an exclamation-point. The printer of FO. I makes but sparing use of the exclamation-point, setting in its stead sometimes an interrogation-point, sometimes a period or colon. Most of the former cases, however, are in such phrases as "How now?" v. 28 or "What hoa?" II. 2. 9, phrases which in EL. E. were

evidently regarded as interrogative—as they really are—and were therefore punctuated with an interrogation-point, though in modern printing they require a mark of exclamation. Both the query-mark and the exclamation-point were originally variations of the semi-

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

colon and early printers do not sharply distinguish between them. Here, however, it is better to retain the Folio pointing, for WE FAILE seems rather to be a surprised inquiry at the notion of failure than 'the calm deduction of a mind which, having weighed all circumstances, is prepared, without loss of confidence in itself, for the worst that can happen,' as Stevens would have it. It is not the effect of failure on her own mind, but how the possibility of it is affecting Macbeth, that Lady Macbeth is concerned about, and in her assured confidence she echoes her husband's words with an ironical rising inflection: she will not contemplate the notion—the thing is too easy for failure, if only Macbeth will not play the "poor cat in th' addage"—how easy she goes on to show. Moreover, she knows that they dare not fail: "th' attempt and not the deed Confounds us" II.2.11. It is better, therefore, to take the words as they are printed in FO. I, 'Are you thinking of failure?' with heavy secondary stress on WE, "Wē faile?" ¶60 BUT, if we follow the punctuation of the Folio for "Wē faile?" is probably used in its adverbial sense of 'only,' and not as an adversative conjunction; cp. v.6. Stevens thought that the reference in this verse was to the screwing up of a stringed instrument. But there is an incongruity of association between the tuning of a musical instrument and Macbeth's nerving himself to his task—an incongruity that Shakspeare would have avoided. It is more likely that Lady Macbeth is thinking of the cross-bow rack or gaffle, a small detachable winch to draw the string of the bow to its STICKING PLACE, the action of which would naturally be connoted by SCREW. There seems to be an echo of this in Macbeth's "bend up" in v.79. Cp., too, "As [i.e. as if] he had seen't or beene an instrument To vice you to't" Wint. T.1.2.415 and "Wrench up thy power to th' highest" Cor. I.8.11 (cited by Cl. Pr.) and "I partly know the instrument That screwes me from my true place" Tw. N. V. I. 125 (cited by Stevens). The rhythm "And wē 'le nōt fāyle" reflects the tensivity of Lady Macbeth's purpose: if "We faile" is a mere declaration, and not an inquiry, the rhythm is difficult to catch, for too much stress thus falls upon NOT. ¶62 WHERETO, 'to which'; M.E. and EL.E. frequently made use of the adverb where MN.E. prefers the relative phrase. RATHER has here its original sense of 'earlier,' and the instrumental article THE seems to be used as in III.1.26, 'earlier than usual.' ¶63 SOUNDLY, 'heartily,' cp. "love me soundly" Hen.5 v.2.105. ¶64 WASSELL, 'carousing,' cp. "Antony, leave thy lascivious wassails" Ant. & Cl. I.4.56. CONVINCe, 'overpower,' cp. N.E.D. I and IV.3.142. ¶65 In mediæval psychology the MEMORIE had its "seat and organ" in "the back part of the brain," fantasy or imagination in the middle "cell," the "Common sense," i.e. sensation, in the fore part, cp. Burton, 'Anat. of Mel.' I.i.2.7. Vicary's division is somewhat different: "Common sense" in the fore part; in the one part of this same ventricle is the "vertue that is called Fantasie"; in the other part is the "Imaginative vertue"; "in the midst sel" the "cogitative or estimative vertue; for he rehearseth, sheweth, declareth and deemeth those things that be offered unto him [hence Shakspeare's "receipt of reason" v.66] by the other"; in the third ventricle "the vertue Memorative." Comenius, 'Janua' 343, in giving the same psychology adds, "This [i.e. the fore part] in sleep time is stopped up by moist steams: hence cometh insensibleness." But it is not clear why Shakspeare calls memory the WARDER OF THE BRAINE: that would rather be sensation—the "five wittes" are sometimes spoken of in mediæval literature as the "watchmen" in the foremost cell. There is a similar difficulty in L.L.L. IV.2.70, where the fancy is referred to as "memorie," but there the confusion may be intentional: it is Holofernes that is speaking. The quotation from Comenius, too, points to the senses as being overpowered by the "fume." ¶66 FUMES were vapours produced in the body and rising to the brain: we still speak of the fumes of alcohol mounting to one's brain. Here memory itself becomes a fume, cp. "The charme dessolves apace . . their rising senses Begin to chace [i.e. drive away] the ignorant [i.e. blinding, keeping in ignorance, cp. note to I.5.58] fumes that mantle Their clearer reason" Temp. V.1.64. RECEIT, 'place of receipt,' 'treasury,' still familiar to us from Matt. IX. 9, "the receipt of custom"; cp.,



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

too, "The most convenient place that I can thinke of For such receipt of learning is Black-Fryers" Hen.8 II.2.139. ¶ 67 LYMBECK, 'an alembic or still,' cp. N.E.D. 'alembic': 'their confused brains shall collect not ideas but fumes.' ¶ 68 DRENCHED, 'submerged,' 'drowned,' cp. N.E.D.6 and "till you have drench'd our steeples" Lear III.2.3. NATURE frequently in EL.E. stands for 'life,' 'vitality,' cp. II.2.7. A DEATH does not mean 'a kind of death,' but is an instance of the common EL. use of the indefinite article before abstract nouns where in MN.E. it is omitted; cp. "I require a clearenesse" III.1.133, "the waight of present miserie pressing him, the dread of a death, and a death attending him" Purchas, 'Pilgrimage' v, p.33, and "but with a crossebowe sent a death to the poore beast" Sidney, 'Arcadia' p.40. ¶ 70 PUT UPON, 'accuse of,' cp. "put on him what forgeries you please" Ham. II.1.19. ¶ 72 QUELL, 'murder,' usually a verb in EL.E.; cp. Florio, "*mazzare*, to kill, to slay, to quell," and "syth I did father quell" Newton, 'Thebais' (Sp. Soc., p.94); in Comenius, 'Janua' 669, "manslayers" is glossed "manquellers, assassinats." The word seems to be slightly euphemistic, like Macbeth's "taking off" in v.20.

## ACT I SCENE VII 72-82

### MACBETH

Bring forth men-children onely;  
For thy undaunted mettle should compose  
Nothing but males. Will it not be receiv'd,  
When we have mark'd with blood those  
sleepie two

Of his owne chamber, and us'd their very  
daggers,

That they have don't?

### LADY MACBETH

Who dares receive it other,  
As we shall make our griefes and clamor rore  
Upon his death?

### MACBETH

I am settled, and bend up  
Each corporall agent to this terrible feat.  
Away, and mock the time with fairest show;  
False face must hide what the false heart  
doth know.

### EXEUNT

'Silent Woman' III.1; cp., too, Meas. I.3.16. With a touch of vulgar criminality Macbeth begins to give active support to Lady Macbeth's plot. ¶ 77 OTHER is still an adverb in EL.E., 'otherwise.' ¶ 78 AS, rather 'when' than 'since.' RORE in EL.E. was a more dignified term for loud weeping and sobbing than it is now; cp. "Did I say before, they began to weep? I can assure you when she had done they roared outright" 'Patient Grissel,' 1619, Per. Soc., p.31; cp. Oth. v.2.198. ¶ 79 SETTLED, 'determined'; cp. "No he's settled, Not to come off, in his displeasure" Hen.8 III.2.22. The verse has an extra impulse after the pause unless I AM is to be read "I'm": the printer of FO.1 does not always mark contractions with an apostrophe, e.g. IV.2.16, IV.3.149. ¶ 80 The

¶ 72 Macbeth's amazement at his wife's courage is admirably reflected in the rhythm, contrasting as it does with the rapidly moving verses which precede. ¶ 73 UNDAUNTED is another of those EL. adjectives in -ed, 'undauntable,' 'fearless.' In EL.E. METTLE and "metal" had not yet been distinguished by different forms, and the word still retained its meaning of 'material,' 'constituent elements'; cp. "I am made of that selfe-same mettle as my sister" Lear. I.1.71. ¶ 74 RECEIV'D, 'believed'; cp. "It is reported to them for my humour and they receive it so" Ben Jonson,

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

CORPORALL AGENTS are, of course, the "mortal instruments," the spirits which execute the will of the ego. ¶ 81, 82 To finish a scene with a couplet, as here, was a common practice with Elizabethan dramatists, cp. e.g. the end of the next scene and of II.3, II.4, III.2, IV.3, etc. The effect of such verses, after the freedom of Shakspeare's easy-flowing blank verse, is unfortunately mechanical; scholars, therefore, forgetting the taste of the time, are prone to consider them spurious. The action closes with Macbeth and Lady Macbeth returning to the banqueting-room.

The first act has presented the murder of Duncan as a "thought," an idea assuming the aspects of a malicious purpose. In the prologue scene it is foreshadowed as a malicious intention of the powers of evil brooding over and controlling, through their witch instruments, the action which is to follow. Scene II prepares for its lodgement in Macbeth's mind by creating for him the opportunity of power. Scene III gives the idea a lodgement there by playing on the ambitions of a man naturally superstitious. Scene IV furnishes the opportunity of place for its execution. Scene V reveals it as a malicious design already in the mind of Lady Macbeth, but now ineradicably fixed there by her invocation of the powers of evil. Scene VI brings together the two "thoughts"—Lady Macbeth's and her husband's—and welds them into one consuming ambition that will devastate the soul of each, and drive them both to madness.

The harmonious unity of this first act is often missed because the modern reader is quite unaware of the seriousness and awful reality which demoniacal possession assumed in the Elizabethan mind. To get the full significance of the tragedy one must remember that the reality and malignity of supernatural influences for evil was doubted by few in Shakspeare's time. Even Bacon, despite the scientific acuteness of his mind, has this to say about them: "But the sober and grounded enquiry into the nature of angels and spirits which may arise out of the passages of Holy Scriptures, or out of the gradations [*i.e.* processes] of Nature, is not restrained [*i.e.* subject to restriction]; so that of degenerate and revolted spirits; the conversing with them or the employment of them is prohibited: much more any veneration toward them. [Macduff in V.8.14 speaks of Macbeth as having continually served the devil.] But the contemplation or science of their nature, their power, their illusions, either by scripture or reason, is a part of spirituall wisdom" 'Advancement of Learning, The Second Booke' (1633), p. 136.

It is only from such a point of view that one can clearly grasp the magnificent unity of Shakspeare's involution. For the tragedy lies in the spiritual significance and fatal consequence of Macbeth's yielding to the powers of evil, not in the action itself. And, like Hamlet, Macbeth is a tragedy of character, not a tragedy of events. Its evolution does not begin until Act III. Act I, therefore, is but the preparatory stage, despite the fact that it is so crowded with cumulating detail, and its theme is the 'thought' of Duncan's murder, the moving cause of Macbeth's insanity. Shakspeare has embodied this theme in Macbeth's words in I.3.139-142. Act II will have for its theme the act of murder and its immediate consequence.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

## THE SECOND ACT

SCENE I: INVERNESS: THE COURT OF MACBETH'S CASTLE  
ENTER BANQUO AND FLEANCE WITH A TORCH BEFORE HIM

I-9

BANQUO

OW goes the night, boy?

FLEANCE. The moone is downe; I have not heard the clock.

BANQUO. And she goes downe at twelve.

FLEANCE. I take 't, 't is later, sir.

BANQUO. Hold, take my sword: there 's husbandry in heaven,  
Their candles are all out. Take thee that too.

EXIT FLEANCE



A heavie summons lyes like lead upon me,  
And yet I would not sleepe: mercifull powers,  
Restraine in me the cursed thoughts that  
nature

Gives way to in repose.

As usual, there is no place direction in FO. I, but from what follows there can be little doubt that Banquo and Fleance are crossing the quadrangle or inner court of the castle on the way to bed; see the introductory note to

Scene II. The stage direction of modern editions reads "bearing a torch," etc.; but TORCH in EL. E. frequently means 'link-boy,' 'torch-bearer,' cp. introductory note to I. 7. ¶ 4 HOLD . . . HEAVEN is two verses in FO. I, the first ending at SWORD. The words are addressed to Fleance. That Banquo parts with his sword may be an evidence of "confidence in the integrity of his host" (Cl. Pr.), or merely a suggestion to the audience that he intends to retire for the night. HUSBANDRY, 'careful management,' N. E. D. 4 b: "If you suspect my husbandry . . . Call me before th'exactest auditors" Timon II. 2. 164. It is one of those homely associations such as occurs in "blanket of the dark" I. 5. 54. ¶ 5 THEIR is an instance of M. E. and EL. E. syntax by which the third personal pronoun is used indefinitely with reference to an antecedent implied, not expressed. THEE: in EL. E. the personal pronoun is frequently used to denote the person interested in the action; cp. "Kalander . . . never having heard [EL. E. for 'heard of'] him his beloved guesates" Sidney, 'Arcadia' p. 324, and "That Blaunche be sent me home again" 'Faire Em' III. 5. 46. The construction is frequent in an imperative idiom where, according to MN. E. notions of syntax, the reflexive pronoun of the second person takes the place of a subject; see Schmidt for instances, "stay thee," "hark thee" (cp. dial. "harkee"), "run thee," etc., and Spies, 'zur Geschichte der englischen Pronomens' (Halle, 1897), pp. 152 ff. THAT is probably a reference to his dagger. Fleance goes out here, leaving his father to walk in the courtyard for a while before going to bed. There is no EXIT FLEANCE in FO. I; but that Fleance does not hear the colloquy between Macbeth and his father is evident from the EXIT BANQUO after v. 30,



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

and from the fact that Macbeth would hardly be so rude as to ignore Fleance's presence in saying "good night." It is more likely that the exit has been omitted here than that the EXIT BANQUO after v. 30 is a printer's error for "Exeunt Banquo and Fleance"; the omission is rendered still more probable by the fact that v. 5 ends the page in FO. I: thus EXIT FLEANCE would have come in the lower right-hand corner, and to the proof-reader would have looked like a mistaken catchword. In Lear I.4.362 (FO. I, p. 289) an "Exit Oswald" has obviously been lost after v. 362, which ends the page, only the catchword "and" standing in the corner. ¶6 HEAVIE, 'overpowering,' N.E.D. 26; cp. "the heavy offer of it [i.e. sleep]" Temp. II.1.194. ¶7 WOULD NOT, 'do not want to.' ¶9 GIVES WAY TO means 'gives rein to,' not 'succumbs to'; cp. "gave him way, In all his owne desires" Cor. V.6.32. In EL. psychology the "Phantasie" was "evermore stirring" (Comenius, 'Janua' 343). That Banquo's fantasy has been working on the meeting with the weird sisters we are explicitly told in v. 20; that these fancies are not unaccompanied by temptation we gather from the word "cursed," and at the same time we learn that Banquo has put the temptation behind him. Alone with his son in Macbeth's castle, clearly realizing on what a slender thread the life of the king hangs; knowing, as he alone does, the secret of Macbeth's ambition; having noticed, too, in all probability, Macbeth's departure from the hall and his return with Lady Macbeth, and realizing that he has only to give his support to Macbeth's interests to ensure the kingly honour for his son—amid such surroundings there is little wonder that he should be anxious. His anxiety is reflected in the dialogue as it is in that of the opening scene of Hamlet—short, tense sentences relating to the time of night. The reader, in thinking of Macbeth's entrance, must remember that "Enter" in EL. stage directions means merely that the actor noted begins his part. Macbeth and his servant are supposed to be unrecognizable in the gloom until quite near to Banquo; cp. Ham. I.1.14, where modern editors displace the "Enter Horatio and Marcellus": in FO. I it comes before Francisco's "Who's there?"

## ACT II

## SCENE I

9-17

ENTER MACBETH AND A SERVANT WITH A TORCH  
Give me my sword: who's there? 9, 10

MACBETH

A friend. 11

BANQUO

What, sir, not yet at rest? the king's a bed.  
He hath beene in unusuall pleasure, and  
Sent forth great largesse to your offices:  
This diamond he greetes your wife withall,  
By th' name of most kind hostesse; and  
shut up  
In measurelesse content.

¶10 Banquo hears some one approaching, and in his nervousness calls for his sword: either Fleance returns momentarily to give it to him and goes to bed when he discovers that the stranger is their host, or Banquo's words are merely a realization of his defenceless position. ¶13 The verse division of FO. I is He . . pleasure, And . . offices, This . . withall, By . . hostesse, And . . content. PLEASURE, cp. "I am full of pleasure" Temp. III.2.125. ¶14 LARGESSE is plural in EL. E., like "richesse," and means 'gifts.' OFFICES, 'the apartments of domestics,' cp. "empty lodgings and unfurnish'd walles, unpeopel'd offices, untroden stones" Rich.2 I.2.68; it is not a misprint for "officers," as Malone thought. The king intends to leave on the morrow. ¶15 WITHALL, cp. I.3.57 and note. ¶16 "By the name" of FO. I is probably the printer's error for BY TH' NAME. SHUT UP (FO. 2, FO. 3, FO. 4 "shut it up") used intransitively for going to bed has not yet been found in EL. E. In Marston, 'Antonio and Mellida' V.1.150, occurs the locution "shut up night": "I was

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

mighty strong in thought we should have shut up night with an old comedy." It may be that in EL. E. "shut up" with a similar connotation was used intransitively, as in "Actions begunne in glory shut up in shame" (cited by Cent. Dict. from Bishop Hall's Contemplations II. 2, published in 1612): the change in tense would not be unusual in EL. E., cp. note to I. 2. 15. But it is quite possible that AND SHUT UP, etc., has been misplaced, belonging after PLEASURE, v. 13; see the verse division of the Folio. The fact that the two passages begin with the same word makes this likely. Putting it in as an independent verse after "pleasure," omitting the "and" before "sent forth," or making it exchange places with "and . . . offices," gives us excellent sense. SHUT UP IN will then have its EL. meaning of 'restricted to'; cp. "shut us up in wishes," i.e. confine us to expressions of good will, All's W. I. 1. 197, and "So shall I cloath me in a forc'd content, And shut my selfe up in [i.e. confine myself to] some other course To Fortune's almes" Oth. III. 4. 120. Such an idea sounds like Duncan, cp. I. 4. 21; but we are not warranted in making the alteration until we are sure that "shut up" in EL. E. cannot mean "retired for the night."

ACT II SCENE I 17-24

MACBETH

Being unprepar'd,

Our will became the servant to defect,  
Which else should free have wrought.

BANQUO

All's well.

I dreamt last night of the three weyward  
sisters:

To you they have shew'd some truth.

MACBETH

I thinke not of them:

Yet, when we can entreat an houre to serve,  
We would spend it in some words upon that  
busnesse,

If you would graunt the time.

¶ 18 DEFECT in EL. E. means 'faultiness,' cp. N. E. D. 3.

¶ 19 FREE, likewise, connotes 'faultlessly' as well as 'unrestrainedly,' cp. I. 3. 155.

WROUGHT is the preterite of 'work,' as in I. 3. 149, and here means 'had its due effect';

cp. "The better shall my purpose worke on him" Oth. I. 3. 397. ¶ 21 SHEW'D, 'disclosed,' 'told,' cp. "Shew me thy thought" Oth. III. 3. 116.

Banquo evidently thinks it wise for him to be the first to broach the subject which he

knows is uppermost in Macbeth's mind, displaying that "wisdom to act in safety" which Macbeth remarks on in III. 1. 53. This terse dialogue, with its thrust and parry, is a fine illustration of Shakspeare's power to depict the thought behind the word. EL. E. was an admirable tool for this purpose. The language was then gaining much of its modern accuracy and definiteness of connotation, without yet having lost the richness of the M. E. vocabulary. Its virility, too, had not yet been impaired by a literary consciousness begot of grammars and dictionaries, and many direct and forceful idioms which are now become dialectic or vulgar still remained in good literary usage. And wide as was Shakspeare's range of expression, we must not forget that it lay within the limits of current Elizabethan idiom. Contemporary critics, though they did not hesitate to say that he borrowed his matter and padded out his verse, never accused him of unintelligibility. I THINKE NOT OF THEM, 'I pay no heed to them,' cp. "not a thought but thinkes on dignitie" 2Hen. 6 III. 1. 338. The word occurs with the same meaning in III. 1. 132, "alwayes thought That I require a clearenesse," i.e. always bearing in mind, etc.: Macbeth affects indifference, as in I. 3. 119. ¶ 22 ENTREAT, either 'induce,' 'get' (N. E. D. 10 a) with 'to serve' as complementing infinitive, or used in the sense of 'passing the time,' cp. "My lord, we must

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

intreat the time alone" Rom.&Jul. IV. 1. 40. ¶ 23 WE is taken by Cl. Pr. as referring to Macbeth, who adopts "the royal we by anticipation." But such an explanation is awkward; "consent" below would have been far more likely to occasion such a usage. In view of Macbeth's affected indifference in v. 21 and of his evident desire to entrap Banquo into compromising overtures, it is much more likely that WE is the ordinary plural, and WE WOULD expresses merely futurity as the apodosis of "If you would grant." The rhythm requires the contracted form "we'd"; it is probable that the contraction was overlooked by the printer, as is often the case in EL. texts, e.g. "I would scratch that face" Drayton, 'Heroical Epistles,' Sp. Soc., p. 271. **BUSINESSE** in the 17th century means 'topic,' N.E.D. 17, but perhaps here merely 'matter,' as understood by N.E.D. 18.

## ACT II

## SCENE I

24-30

BANQUO

At your kind'st leysure.

MACBETH

If you shall cleave to my consent, when 't is,  
It shall make honor for you.

BANQUO

So I lose none

In seeking to augment it, but still keepe  
My bosome franchis'd and allegiance cleare,  
I shall be counsail'd.

MACBETH

Good repose the while!

BANQUO

Thankes, sir: the like to you!

EXIT BANQUO

¶ 24 KIND'ST, cp. note on 1.5.2. ¶ 25 Macbeth's **CLEAVE TO MY CONSENT** seems to be equivocal, cp. note to 1.3.155: he may mean 'if you should concur with my opinion,' cp. N.E.D. 6 and "By my consent wee 'le even let them alone" 1 Hen.6 1.2.44; or 'if you will join my party,' N.E.D. 7, inviting Banquo to enter into conspiracy with him, but leaving himself the loophole of escape if Banquo refuses. He intends to learn, too, whether Banquo's interest in the matter is philosophical or personal.

Many foolish conjectures have been proposed for **CONSENT** in order to make the phrase into MN.E. **WHEN 'T IS**, i.e. when the time comes; the line division of the Folio is lf . . consent, When . . you. ¶ 26 **HONOR**, also, is a purposely vague word. It may have, if the words are jestingly taken, its EL. meaning of 'reputation,' 'it will redound to your credit,' cp. "to cause honour or make men much esteeme and reverence one" Baret, 'Alvearie' s.v.; or it may have its meaning of 'rank,' 'position,' as in 1.6.17, if the words are seriously taken. Banquo, by a platitudinous and non-committal answer, quite evades the issue that Macbeth has raised. **NONE**, i.e. honor, integrity, or rank. ¶ 27 **IT**, i.e. reputation, position. **STILL**, 'always.' ¶ 28 **FRANCHIS'D** seems here to refer to moral freedom, but in N.E.D. 1 b no instance later than 1483 is given for the word with this meaning. Banquo seems to be thinking of the word in association with **HONOR** in its feudal sense, 'lordship,' and to mean to say that if he is to have honours they must be honours of "free tenure" as far as Macbeth is concerned. He carries the notion further in **ALLEGANCE CLEARE**; cp. Cowel, 1687, s.v. 'ligeancy,' "Ligeancy is such a duty or fealty as no man may owe to more than one Lord, and therefore it is most commonly used for that duty and allegiance which every good subject owes to his Liege Lord the King": he cites the 'Grand Customary of Normandy,' cap. 13, to show that the duty of loyal vassals to their lord is "*ei se in omnibus innocuos* [cp. Shakspeare's "cleare"] *exhibere, nec ei adversantium partem in aliquo confovere*." It has long since been pointed out that Shakspeare was not ignorant of the technical forms and verbiage of English



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

law, and his representation of Banquo's thought shows marvellous skill in implicating a particular situation in general legal terms. ¶ 29 TO BE COUNSAILED is an EL. phrase meaning 'to take advice,' cp. "pray be counsaill'd," i.e. take my advice, Cor. III. 2.28. Banquo's

## ACT II SCENE I 31-43

### MACBETH

Goe bid thy mistresse, when my drinke is ready,  
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.

EXIT SERVANT

Is this a dagger which I see before me,  
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee:

I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.  
Art thou not, fatall vision, sensible  
To feeling as to sight? or art thou but  
A dagger of the minde, a false creation  
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed braine?  
I see thee yet, in forme as palpable,  
As this which now I draw.  
Thou marshall'st me the way that I was  
going,  
And such an instrument I was to use.

Burton, 'Anat. of Mel.' II. 2. 5. It is probable that Macbeth intends Banquo to hear these words as he leaves him for the night in order to give him the impression that he is going at once to bed, as well as to afford his servant a natural reason for leaving him alone. ¶ 36 FATALL in EL. E. means 'prophetic,' N. E. D. 4 b; cp. "fatall bell-man" II. 2. 3 and "fatall raven" Titus II. 3. 97; this seems to be its meaning here, cp. vv. 42, 43. SENSIBLE, 'perceptible,' cp. Cotgrave, "*perceptible*, perceivable, sensible," and Florio, "*perceptibile*, perceivable, sensible." ¶ 39 Macbeth's explanation of the phenomenon is similar to that in Burton, 'Anat. of Mel.' I. 3. 3: 'As Lord Mercurius proves, by reason of inward vapours and humours from the blood, choler, &c., diversely mixed, they apprehend and see outwardly, as they suppose, divers images which indeed are not. . . Corrupt vapours, mounting from the body to the head and distilling again from thence to the eyes,' are the causes of these visions. It is the Aristotelian explanation of hallucinations, "*Mira vis concitat humores, ardorque vehemens mentem exagitat*" (i.e. a strange energy stirs up the humours and oppressive heat excites the brain): Macbeth echoes the mediæval phraseology. But Shakspeare himself all through the tragedy represents Macbeth's fits as being due to hallucinations put in his brain by "instruments of darkness," quite the view Burton takes in 'I may not deny that oftentime the devil deludes them, takes opportunity to suggest and represent vain objects. . . I should rather hold with Avicenna and his associates that such symptoms proceed from evil spirits which take all opportunities of humours, decayed or otherwise, to pervert the soul of man.' Shakspeare never states

words show a wisdom, not only to act in safety, but to speak in safety, and Macbeth is little wiser than he was at first: he knows Banquo's "royalty of nature," but he does not know how deep Banquo's suspicions are. ¶ 30 Modern editors here read "Exeunt Banquo and Fleance," cp. note to v. 5.

¶ 31 BID is used in its e. N. E. sense of 'ask.' The omission of "that" in EL. E. where modern idiom requires its presence is not unusual; cp. I. 6. 13 and "Obedience bids I should not bidagen" Rich. 2 I. 1. 163. DRINKE, a night drink or posset, like that referred to in II. 2. 6. That it was customary to take them before going to bed is shown by Merry W. I. 4. 8 and V. 5. 180. Cp., too, "Andrew Boorde [commends as a remedy against terrible dreams] a good draught of strong drink before one goes to bed"

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

this explanation explicitly: the nearest approach to it is in V. 8. 19 ff.; but the educated part of Shakspeare's audience no doubt saw the connection between Macbeth's hallucinations and his traffic with the witches. ¶ 42 MARSHALL'ST, 'leadest,' cp. "Reason becomes the marshall to my will" Mids. II. 2. 120. ¶ 43 TO USE: in EL. E. the substantive verb followed by the infinitive was often employed to express necessity; cp. "Minos is not to learne how," etc., Jonson, 'Poetaster' II. 4, and "that ancient painter . . being to represent the griefe of the by standers . . drew," etc., Florio's Montaigne I. 2, and "I am to breake with thee of some affaires" Two Gent. III. 1. 59. Macbeth's words in MN. E. suggest that he has been directed to use a dagger: in EL. E. they mean that he is obliged to use one.

¶ 44 ARE MADE THE FOOLLES O', 'are made the laughing-stock of'; the definite article is omitted in the corresponding MN. E. phrase. ¶ 46 Hafts of weapons were frequently made of boxwood, and DUDGEON, whose earliest English meaning is 'boxwood,' cp. N. E. D. I, is used here for the haft itself. From Cotgrave's "*dague a roelles*, a Scottish dagger, or dudgeon haft dagger," one would infer that the word in Shakspeare's time had special reference to a Scottish weapon. GOUTS, 'drops' in EL. E.; but from a misunderstanding of this passage the word has taken on the meaning of 'splotches' in MN. E., see N. E. D. 5. The verb "are" is often omitted in EL. E. ¶ 47 SO is more widely used in EL. E. than in MN. E. to represent a preceding sentence; cp. "Where was she born? In Argier. O, was she so?" Temp. I. 2. 259. ¶ 48 THE, probably 'my.' BUSINESSE, either 'task,' N. E. D. II, or 'purpose,' N. E. D. 10. INFORMES, 'takes visible shape,' N. E. D. 2. ¶ 49 HALFE-WORLD, 'hemisphere'; cp. Comenius, 32, "the half-ball," and Cotgrave, s. v. *horison*, "half-sphere." The stress *hálfe-wórld* seems unusual to modern ears; but Jonson's "the sun as loth to part from this *hálfe-sphéare*" "Entertainments," ed. 1640, p. 85, shows that it was normal in EL. E. Cp., also, MN. E. "*mán-kind*" with EL. E. "*mán-kind*." "Swéet-héart," "life-blóod," "like-wíse," "*fôre-fáther*" occur in the verse of good EL. writers. ¶ 50 ABUSE, 'deceive,' a common EL. meaning of the word; cp. "Abuses me to damne me" Ham. II. 2. 632. ¶ 51 The fact that there is lacking to the verse an unstressed impulse before the pause has exposed it to various emendations which supply such a word as "now" before WITCHCRAFT, or turn SLEEPE to 'sleeper.' See note to I. 1. 7. To CELEBRATE is 'to perform with ritual,' N. E. D. I. ¶ 52 HECCAT: the word is not evidence of Shakspeare's ignorance of the classics, but merely an illustration of the varying forms which classical proper names assumed in EL. E.; sometimes they were M. E. versions of O. FR. words, sometimes these were altered to be more in accord with their Latin originals, and sometimes they entirely gave place to the Latin originals. We find Ixíon, Páctolus, Cinthéa in a poetic miscellany of the time of James I; Atrides rhyming with "brides" in John Heywood's Marriage Triumph; Delphes in North's Plutarch; Helenie for Helen in Robinson's Handefull of Pleasant Delites. Hecate was the

## ACT II SCENE I 44-52

Mine eyes are made the foolles o' th' other  
sences,  
Or else worth all the rest: I see thee still;  
And on thy blade and dudgeon goutts of blood,  
Which was not so before. There 's no such  
thing:  
It is the bloody businesse, which informes  
Thus to mine eyes. Now o're the one halfe-  
world  
Nature seemes dead, and wicked dreames  
abuse  
The curtain'd sleepe: witchcraft celebrates  
Pale Heccat's offrings; and wither'd murther,

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

ACT II

SCENE I

53—64

Alarum'd by his centinell, the wolfe,  
Whose howle's his watch, thus with his  
stealthy pace,  
With Tarquin's ravishing slides, towards his  
designe  
Moves like a ghost. Thou sowre and firme-  
set earth  
Heare not my steps, which way they walke,  
for feare  
Thy very stones prate of my where-about,  
And take the present horror from the time,  
Which now sutes with it. Whiles I threat,  
he lives:  
Words to the heat of deedes too cold breath  
gives.

A BELL RINGS

I goe, and it is done: the bell invites me.  
Heare it not, Duncan, for it is a knell  
That summons thee to heaven or to hell.

EXIT

mane clocke . . being a watch But being watcht that it may still goe right" L.L.L. III. 1. 194. In "Give me a watch" Rich.3 v.3.63, the word appears from the context to mean a 'watch-candle.' To speak of the wolf-howls as murder's watch is not, therefore, an inapposite figure in EL.E. A similar association of ideas occurs in 2Hen.6 IV. 1.2: "And now loud howling wolves arouse the jades That dragge the tragicke melancholy night." But it is possible that EL.WATCH meant 'watchword,' cp. "an alarum, alarm, or watchword shewing the nearnesse of the enemies" Phr. Gen.; if this were the case, the passage would echo the phraseology of Lucr. 365 ff. ¶55 SLIDES: the "sides" of FO. I seems to be a misprint: Pope suggested 'strides,' which has been followed by the Cambridge text and is supported by "stalkes" in Lucr. 365. But 'slides' involves only one confusion, that of the tall *f* and *fl*, which were single types: cp. note to 1.6.5. The word in EL.E. connoted an even, gliding movement and was applied to the creeping of a serpent or to the approach of a thief; cp. Cooper, 'Thesaurus,' "*lapsus serpentum*, the sliding, gliding, or creeping of a serpent," and Cotgrave, "*griller*: . . to glide, slip, slide, steal"; "*glisser*: to slip; to slide or glide"; "*glissade*: gliding, sliding"; "*glissé*: slipped; slid; crept, or stollen along." This would make the passage echo the phraseology of Lucr. 305, where Tarquin is a 'creeping thief,' or of v.362, where he is a 'lurking serpent.' The word is used as a noun, though in a different sense, in Bacon, who speaks of the "slide and easiness" of Homer's verses, cp. Cent. Dict., 'slide,' n.3. RAVISHING was syncopated in EL.E. to 'rav'shing' (cp. M.E. "parisshe" and "parshe"); the use of the word as an adjective meaning 'relating to ravishment' has been found fault with: some editors put a

patron goddess of classic and mediæval witchcraft; cp. Jonson's note to "three-formed-star" in 'Masque of Queenes,' p.168, "Hecat: . . She was belev'd to governe in witchcraft and is remembered in all their [cp. note to II.1.5] invocations." WITHER'D, 'colorless,' 'ghastly,' cp. "These eyes . . shall see thee withered, bloody, pale, and dead" 1Hen.6 IV.2.38.

¶53 ALARUM'D, 'aroused,' cp. "my best alarum'd spirits" Lear II.1.55. CENTINELL is an illustration of a common M.E. and e.N.E. use of initial *c* before a palatal vowel to represent the sound of *s*; MN.E. 'city,' 'celebrate,' 'century,' etc., are instances where it has been preserved. ¶54 WATCH seems in EL.E. to have been applied to any instrument for telling time. In Phr. Gen. "a watch or clock" is glossed *horarium*; this is followed by "pocket watch"; cp. "A woman that is like a Ger-



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

comma after it, making the word a substantive; others assume a misprint for "Ravishing Tarquin's"; it has even been proposed to read "with Tarquin's ravishing ideas"! In M.E. the word seems to have had the meaning of 'rapid,' 'swift': Chaucer translates Boethius's *rapido turbine* by "ravysshynge sweighe," see 'Globe' Chaucer, p. 360. This meaning may have been preserved in EL.E. Cotgrave, who usually points off different senses of the same word by a semicolon, has "*ravissant*, ravishing, ravenous, violent, greedy, swift." Skinner, 1671, gives among his obsolete words "Ravish" in the sense of 'take,' 'carry,' and notes "*ejusdem familiae est Ravishing, quod exp. a swift sway*," evidently having in mind Chaucer's phraseology. But in the lack of better evidence we hardly dare take the word in the sense of 'sweeping,' though enough of this meaning may have clung to it in Shakspeare's time to make the epithet a natural one. ¶ 56 SOWRE of FO. I is usually taken for a misprint for "sure": but if the word be misprinted, it is much more likely that Shakspeare wrote "sowrd," 'deaf.' *d* was next to *e* in the EL. type-case, and "sowrd" would not be an abnormal EL.E. spelling; cp. Coles's Dict., 1713, "sourd, deaf," and 'Glossographia,' 1707, "surdity, deafness, dulness"; the same gloss is found in Phillipps, 'New World of Words,' 1678, and in Kersey's Dict., 1708. In EL.E. the word seems to have been associated with dullness, stupidity; cp. "a surd and earless generation of men, stupid unto all instruction," Sir Thos. Browne (1605-1682), 'Christian Martyr' III.6 (cited from Cent. Dict.). Shakspeare elsewhere applies the epithets "dull" and "sullen" to the earth, and insensibility to sound and motion seems to be the association in Macbeth's mind: 'hear not and prate not with your echoes.' But EL.E. "sowre" has a somewhat wider range of association than the MN.E. word; cp. Cotgrave, "*rebarbatif*, grim, stern, sowre," and "*saturnien*, rude, harsh, unpleasant, rough, sowre"; "sowre earth" therefore is not such an artificial locution for 'sullen earth' as to make it quite improbable that the Folio represents the word Shakspeare wrote. ¶ 57 HEARE in EL.E. means 'listen to,' cp. "I stood and heard them" II.2.24. WAY THEY is "they may" in FO. I, clearly a misprint, first corrected by Pope. ¶ 58 As WHERE-ABOUT and "whereabouts" were common EL. forms of the adverb (see I.5.6), "whereabout" as a substantive was no more unusual to EL. ears than "whereabouts" is to ours. ¶ 59 PRESENT, 'attendant,' cp. note to I.3.137. ¶ 60 WHILES, 'whilst,' cp. I.5.6. ¶ 61 Macbeth's thought seems to be like that in IV.1.146, with TO THE HEAT construed as indirect object, BREATH taken as meaning 'breathing-space,' 'respite,' N.E.D.8, and COLD as meaning 'dispiriting,' N.E.D.9. A similar form of expression occurs in "the great breath that was given the states in the heat of their affairs," cited from Temple, 1673, in N.E.D. s.v. 'breath.' For the singular verb with plural subject, see note to I.3.147. ¶ 62 THE BELL is probably Lady Macbeth's summons, cp. v.32; some have taken it as a reference to the clock striking the hour of two. The scene would have been stronger if it had ended, as does Scene V of Act I, with the short verse after the couplet: the contrasts, too, in INVITE and SUMMON and TO HEAVEN OR TO HELL do not sound like Shakspeare. The thought is similar to that of I Hen.6 IV.2.39: "Harke, harke, the Dolphin's drumme, a warning bell, Sings heavy musicke to thy timorous soule, And mine shall ring thy dire departure out."

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SCENE II

Davenant arranges the action of this scene as continuous with that of Scene I. Some modern editors also expunge the scene division. But the action marks a separate stage in the drama, and demands an interval for the imagination to grasp the horror of the impending calamity, though the actual time interval between the scenes is slight. In III.4:62 Lady Macbeth evidently refers to this scene in "This is the ayre-drawne-dagger which you said Led you to Duncan." It is likely that Macbeth tells her of his vision when he joins her

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

at the end of the last scene. In v. i. 35 ff. Lady Macbeth fixes the time of the murder at two, counting off the strokes of the bell: "One: two: why then 't is time to doo 't." There is thus a brief time interval between the two scenes: what is more likely, then, than that this is spent in perfecting the last details of the tragedy as the two sit over their possets in the hall? The place is usually given as the same as that of the previous scene, viz. "a courtyard." But the courtyard is so dark that Banquo does not recognize Macbeth in II. i. 10: how, then, can Macbeth say "This is a sorry sight" in II. 2. 21? If we recall for a moment the castle architecture with which Shakspeare was familiar,—for instance, that of Kenilworth,—we have a large courtyard with a flight of steps in one corner leading up to the sleeping-rooms, such as is shown in the cut of Kenilworth in 1620 which is prefixed to the New Shaks. Soc.'s ed. of Robert Laneham's Letter. It is in this courtyard that Scene I takes place. In these quadrangular houses the hall occupied one side of the building, and out of this, at one end, a flight of steps led to a lobby which opened on the guest-chamber: see the rooms lettered E and V in the cut referred to above. In the theatre this lobby would, of course, be the usual gallery or balcony at the back of the stage. Duncan and his two grooms of the chamber would naturally be lodged in the guest-chamber; back of this would be the "second chamber," occupied by Donalbaine and another. Such an arrangement would be familiar to an EL. audience, and explains clearly the action of the scene. At its opening Lady Macbeth is in the hall below, waiting for her husband's return. She has been in Duncan's chamber to see that all is ready, and has laid the daggers of the two grooms where Macbeth "could not misse 'em." The grooms are fast asleep: the doors are open, and she can distinctly hear their drunken snoring. The servants have retired to their quarters, and there is still late carousing through the castle: hence the noises that startle the murderers, and Macbeth's imagined "voice" crying "Sleep no more!" In v. 66 the guilty pair retire to their chamber to wash their hands and put on their night garments, so that it will look as if they had gone to bed.

## SCENE II: THE HALL OF MACBETH'S CASTLE ENTER LADY MACBETH

I—8

LADY MACBETH



HAT which hath made them  
drunk hath made me bold:

What hath quench'd them, hath  
given me fire. Hearke! peace!

It was the owle that shriek'd,  
the fatall bell-man,

Which gives the stern'st good-night. He is  
about it,

The doores are open, and the surfeted groomes  
Doe mock their charge with snores: I have  
drugg'd their possets

That death and nature doe contend about  
them,

Whether they live or dye.

¶ 1 These secondary stresses on THEM and ME give the rhythm tenseness. ¶ 2 QUENCH'D has a double sense, 'allayed their thirst' and 'smothered their vital energy.' A similar play of meaning occurs in 'A bottle of ale to quench me, rascal, I am all fire' Jonson, 'Bartholomew Fair' II. i. For the other meaning, cp. "Dost thou thinke in time she will not quench?" Cym. I. 5. 47. ¶ 3 FATAL, 'death-boding,' cp. II. i. 36. BELL-MAN, cp. "a bellman which goeth before a corps, *praeco feralis*" Phr. Gen. ¶ 4 For form of STERN'ST see note to I. 5. 3.

*Macbeth - Volume in the New Shakspeare Society's edition*

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

The word is used in its sense of 'gloomy,' 'grim.' ¶ 5 SURFETED: probably a dissyllable here; cp. "with forfeited credits make 'em wish a change" Massinger, 'Believe as you List' I. I (Per. Soc., p. 22), and "Macro, most welcome as most coveted friend" Jonson, 'Sejanus' v. 6. ¶ 7 NATURE, i.e. life, cp. note to I. 7. 68.

¶ 9 The stage direction "Enter Macbeth" is usually removed by modern editors to a place before MY HUSBAND. Macbeth comes into the lobby—the gallery above the stage—on his way down into the hall, but hears a noise in the second chamber, cp. v. 19, and softly calling WHO 'S THERE? goes back to see if any one has awakened. The house is full of noises, young courtiers carousing in their rooms and drunken servants in the "offices," and Macbeth's nerves are strung to the point of breaking. Lady Macbeth, too, has heard the noise and fears their plans have miscarried. ¶ 11 They are prepared to explain the 'act' of the murder, but to be caught in the ATTEMPT will ruin them. Baret, 'Alvearie' s.v. 'to attempt,' gives "to assaile a man"; Shakspeare was probably thinking of the attempt on the king's life in its legal aspect. ¶ 13 'EM is now a colloquial clipping of the pronoun 'them': in Shakspeare's time it was a common literary idiom, frequent in Ben Jonson and the most careful writers. The contraction is not necessary to the rhythm here, but is found in FO. I. The representative interest in v. 13 is something more than "very artful," as Warburton called it: it is a startlingly human "touch of nature," one of those associations of childhood that flash into consciousness in a crisis like this. The stress seems to fall upon the pronoun I, the unstressed impulse being omitted, cp. I. I. 7. The verse is independent and not completed by the words "My husband" below, as editors generally print it.

¶ 14 If we take the punctuation of the Folio, MY HUSBAND? is an exclamation of inquiry as Lady Macbeth hears the sound of approaching footsteps. She does not know but that some one may

ACT II

SCENE II

9-14

ENTER MACBETH

MACBETH

Who's there? what ho?

LADY MACBETH

Alack! I am afraid they have awak'd  
And 't is not done: th' attempt, and not the deed,

Confounds us. Hearke! I lay'd their daggers ready,  
He could not misse 'em. Had he not resembled

My father as he slept, I had don 't.

and softly calling WHO 'S THERE? goes back to see if any one has awakened. The house is full of noises, young courtiers carousing in their rooms and drunken servants in the "offices," and Macbeth's nerves are strung to the point of breaking. Lady Macbeth, too, has heard the noise and fears their plans have miscarried. ¶ 11 They are prepared to explain the 'act' of the murder, but to be caught in the ATTEMPT will ruin them. Baret, 'Alvearie' s.v. 'to attempt,' gives "to assaile a man"; Shakspeare was probably thinking of the attempt on the king's life in its legal aspect. ¶ 13 'EM is now a colloquial clipping of the pronoun 'them': in Shakspeare's time it was a common literary idiom, frequent in Ben Jonson and the most careful writers. The contraction is not necessary to the rhythm here, but is found in FO. I. The representative interest in v. 13 is something more than "very artful," as

ACT II

SCENE II

14-17

My husband?

MACBETH

I have done the deed. Didst thou not heare  
a noyse?

LADY MACBETH

I heard the owle schreame and the crickets cry.

Did not you speake?

MACBETH

When?

LADY MACBETH

Now.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

have awakened and be coming into the hall. The modern punctuation takes the words as an exclamation of admiration—her woman's recognition that Macbeth is worthy of her love: a tempting explanation. But we have just had one exhibition of sentiment in Lady Macbeth: is it likely that Shakspeare would add another? If "My husband?" is spoken before Macbeth comes down, and we take I HAVE DONE THE DEED, i.e. 'It's over now,' cp. 1. 7. 1 ff., as muttered by Macbeth to himself as he descends and indistinctly heard by Lady Macbeth, we have an easy explanation of her "Did not you speake?" He does not need to tell her that he has done the deed: the bloody daggers and the ominous stillness above speak for themselves. ¶ 17 DID NOT YOU SPEAKE? (the phrase is in its normal EL. E. word order, the parent of our colloquial "Did n't you speak?"): some editors, not understanding the action of the scene, alter the text so as to give

## ACT II SCENE II 17-26

MACBETH

As I descended?

LADY MACBETH

I.

MACBETH

Hearke!

Who lyes i' th' second chamber?

LADY MACBETH

Donalbaine.

MACBETH

MARKING THE DAGGERS

This is a sorry sight.

LADY MACBETH

A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

MACBETH

There 's one did laugh in 's sleepe, and one cry'd, 'Murther!'

That they did wake each other: I stood and heard them:

But they did say their prayers, and addrest them

Againe to sleepe.

LADY MACBETH

There are two lodg'd together.

this speech to Macbeth, and WHEN? as well as NOW? to Lady Macbeth, pointing DESCENDED with a period. But if we may take such liberties with Shakspeare, we might as well rewrite the play to suit our own notions, as Davenant did, and have done with it. Lady Macbeth is evidently referring to something that she heard Macbeth say as he came into the hall.

¶ 17 The sharp, broken dialogue makes a panting rhythm admirably adapted to the thought: in FO. I each part of the dialogue between "When" and "I" makes a separate verse: if we arrange them together they fall rather into two verses, each of four stresses, with pauses occasionally taking the place of unstressed impulses, than into one verse of five stresses followed by two broken verses, as in the Cambridge Text. Lady Macbeth's I is the normal EL. spelling of the particle of assent, now 'aye'; the earliest diphthongal spelling in N.E.D. is dated 1637: 'yes' has taken its place in literary MN.E. Macbeth does not answer, his attention being distracted by another alarm. ¶ 20 LYES is, of

course, the EL. word for MN.E. 'sleeps.' By the SECOND CHAMBER was probably meant the one next the chamber of state, either connected with it by a gallery or independent as in Kenilworth Castle. If the latter, Macbeth hears the mutterings of the rest-

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

less sleepers through the open windows. Lady Macbeth's answer seems to satisfy him for the moment. He then notices with a start his blood-stained hands, probably holding up the daggers which he still clutches. MARKING THE DAGGERS is not in FO. I: stage directions occur but sparsely in EL. dramatic texts. Pope added 'Looks on his hands,' and 'Looking on his hands' is usually given in modern editions. Some direction is undoubtedly necessary to point the reference; but 'looking on his hands' is hardly apposite when each hand grips its bloody 'instrument'; see v. 48. ¶21 THIS IS A SORRY SIGHT: may not these words be a first realization of his helplessness?—he cannot go to find out what is the

cause of the noise with these things in his hands. He then recalls that when he went back toward the room whence the sounds came there were two voices. ¶23 THERE'S, the EL. contraction for 'there was,' cp. note to I. 2. 15. ¶24 THAT, 'so that.' STOOD, 'stood still,' cp. "take leave and stand not to reply" 3Hen. 6 IV. 8. 23. HEARD, 'listened to,' cp. II. 1. 57. ¶25 PRAYERS is dissyllabic in EL. E., cp. note to I. 5. 40. THEM, 'themselves': in M. E. and e. N. E. the pronoun of the third person is used reflexively. ADDREST TO SLEEPER is an EL. idiom like that in 'address one's self to a task,' and is here equivalent to little more than 'went.' Lady Macbeth's explanation is natural and matter of fact: she has assigned two guests to a single chamber.

¶28 AS, 'as if,' cp. I. 4. 11. HANGMAN in EL. E. means 'executioner,' N. E. D. I; cp. "the hangman's axe" Merch. IV. 1. 125. ¶29 LISTNING, 'listening to the expression of,' cp. "To listen our purpose" Ado III. 1. 11. Macbeth's surprise at not being able to say AMEN to a GOD BLESSE US is not a note of hypocrisy in his character, but due to his failure to realize the fact that he has sold himself to the powers of darkness. It was a popular superstition of

## ACT II SCENE II 27—40

MACBETH

One cry'd 'God blesse us!' and 'Amen' the other,

As they had seene me with these hangman's hands:

Listning their feare, I could not say 'Amen,'  
When they did say 'God blesse us.' 30

LADY MACBETH

Consider it not so deeply. 30

MACBETH

But wherefore could not I pronounce  
'Amen'?

I had most need of blessing, and 'Amen'  
Stuck in my throat.

LADY MACBETH

These deeds must not be thought  
After these wayes: so, it will make us mad.

MACBETH

Me thought I heard a voyce cry 'Sleep no more!

Macbeth does murth' sleepe'—the innocent sleepe,

Sleepe that knits up the ravel'd sleave of care,

The death of each dayes life, sore labor's bath,

Balme of hurt mindes, great nature's second course,

Chiefe nourisher in life's feast,—

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

ACT II SCENE II 40-47

LADY MACBETH

What doe you meane?

MACBETH

Still it cry'd 'Sleepe no more!' to all the house:

'Glamis hath murther'd sleepe, and therefore Cawdor

Shall sleepe no more; Macbeth shall sleepe no more.'

LADY MACBETH

Who was it that thus cry'd? Why, worthy thane,

You doe unbend your noble strength to thinke So braine-sickly of things. Goe get some water,

And wash this filthie witnesse from your hand.

sense still retained in phrases like 'in word and deed'; and so Macbeth says in III.4.144 that he and his partner are "young in deed," i.e. inexperienced in action. THOUGHT means 'looked at,' 'considered,' 'regarded': see note to II.1.21. ¶ 34 AFTER THESE WAYES, 'in this fashion,' cp. "after this downe-right way" Meas.III.2.112. SO: i.e. 'if we regard them in this way,' see note to II.1.47. ¶ 35 The voice, 'proceeding from a corrupt imagination' (Burton, 'Anat. of Mel.' 1.3.1), may have had its origin in the shouting of drunken revellers in another part of the house. It is another symptom of Macbeth's insanity. As in I.5.24 ff., there are no quotation-marks in FO. I: but it is not likely that the quotation extends beyond "more." ¶ 36 INNOCENT is probably "inn'cent," cp. I.5.66. ¶ 37 KNITS UP, 'binds up,' cp. "let me teach you how to knit againe This scattred corne into one mutuall sheafe" Titus V.3.70. RAVEL'D, 'entangled,' cp. "as you unwind her love from him, Least it should ravell and be good to none" Two Gent. III.2.51. SLEAVE in EL.E. is the name for unwrought or unspun silk; cp. "thou idle, immateriall skiene of sleive silke" Tro.&Cr. V.1.35. In Florio, 1598, *sfillazza* is glossed "any kind of ravelled stuffe, or sleave silk," cited by Malone; Cl. Pr. adds "*bauellare*, to ravell as raw silke." Both these entries show that "ravelling" was a common association with this "unwrought silk." Skinner, in attempting to trace sleave silk to Dutch *sleyp*, says that it is so called because, before it is knit up, *netum sit*, it hangs to the ground in a long train, *syrmate*: Dutch *sleyp* is a translation of Latin *syрма*. The Folio spelling "sleeve" seems to be abnormal, as the *e* is generally written as an open vowel in EL.E.; in Tro.&Cr. the Quarto spelling is "sleive," the Folio spelling "sleyd," but this latter may have been corrupted from "slev'd," another form of the adjective. The history of 'sleave' has not yet been made out, and it may be that a form with close *e* existed in Shakspeare's time. ¶ 38 DEATH OF EACH DAYES LIFE; cp. "death-counterfeiting sleepe" Mids. III.2.364 and "To see the life as lively mock'd as ever Still sleepe mock'd death" Wint.T. V.3.19.

Shakspeare's time that 'God bless us' was a charm against sorcery and witchcraft; cp. Comenius, 'Janua' 793, "Be-witchings are driven away by amulets, spels, or charms, yea by this one word *Praefiscini*, God forfend, God bless us, &c., spoken to prevent envie or witchcraft." Shakspeare again refers to this superstition in Merch. III.1.22, "Let me say Amen betimes, least the devill crosse my praiier." There can be little doubt that Shakspeare's audience understood the sleeper's cry as an invocation of protection against the devil, and well knew why it was Amen stuck in Macbeth's throat. ¶ 33 THESE in EL.E. is sometimes equivalent to 'such as these,' cp. IV.3.118 and IV.3.74. DEEDS in EL.E. means 'acts,' 'actions,' without the connotation of importance which we usually attach to the word, a



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

Notwithstanding the aptness of the association between sleep and death, Warburton proposed 'birth' and Becket 'breath' for "death," and Jennens conjectured 'grief' for "life." ¶ 39 BALME OF HURT MINDES: Burton, 'Anat. of Mel.,' says that sleep sometimes is a sufficient remedy for 'head-melancholy' 'of itself without any other physic.' SECOND COURSE: in 'For to Serve a Lord,' written at the end of the 15th or the beginning of the 16th century, and printed on p. 366 of the 'Babees Book,' ed. Furnivall, the "second course" is described as the substantial course of a dinner, with a long list of dishes, p. 370, preceded by the "potage" and followed by the "dessert." ¶ 40 NOURISHER seems here to be syncopated to "nour'sher." The reader will do well to compare 2Hen.4 III. 1.6 ff. and Hen.5 IV. 1.274 ff. with this passage. ¶ 41 As in vv. 22 and 27, Macbeth, in his rapt state, pays no attention to Lady Macbeth's words. ¶ 43 The verse echoes the rhythm of I. 3.50, and by its repetition also suggests "All haile, Macbeth!"—a fact which hardly leaves room for doubt as to where the quotation-marks belong. ¶ 45 TO THINKE is normal EL. syntax corresponding to 'by thinking' or 'when you think'; cp. I. 5.32.

¶ 46 BRAINE-SICKLY: EL. adjectives in *-ly* formed adverbs without the suffix. The word means 'insanely,' not 'foolishly': "brain-sickness" is the usual EL. gloss for *mania*, "a disease rising of too much abundance of good blood having recourse to the head, which causeth the partie to bee braine-sicke and to fall into furie and rage." ¶ 47 FILTHIE in EL.E. was not so strong a word as now, cp. note to I. 1.10, and WITNESSE is the usual term in EL.E. for 'evidence.'

¶ 49 CARRY in this sense of 'taking to a place' is now obsolete, N.E.D. 5, though still used in Virginia. ¶ 50 SLEEPIE, 'plunged in sleep,' as in I. 7.75, cp. Cotgrave, "*sommeillant*, sleeping; sleepie." ¶ 56 GUILD: the redness of gold gave rise to various word associations in EL.E. which now seem unnatural; "to gild" was to smear with blood, as here and in John II. 1.316, "all gilt with Frenchmen's blood"—this and other citations in N.E.D. I d. Duncan's "golden blood" in II. 3.118 is not a far-fetched figure, but another instance

## ACT II SCENE II 48-59

Why did you bring these daggers from the place?

They must lye there: goe carry them, and smeare

The sleepee groomes with blood.

MACBETH

I'le goe no more:

I am afraid to thinke what I have done;  
Looke on 't againe, I dare not.

LADY MACBETH

Infirme of purpose!

Give me the daggers: the sleeping and the dead

Are but as pictures: 't is the eye of childhood

That feares a painted devill. If he doe bleed,  
I'le guild the faces of the groomes withall,  
For it must seeme their guilt.

EXIT

KNOCKE WITHIN

MACBETH

Whence is that knocking?

How is 't with me, when every noyse appalls me?

What hands are here? hah! They pluck out mine eyes!

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

of this same association of ideas—unfortunately overlooked in N. E. D. So Shakspeare writes “guilded pale lookes, Part shame, part spirit renew’d” for flushing of the face in Cym. V. 3. 34, and “this grand liquor that hath gilded ’em” for the flushing of drink in Temp. V. 1. 280. WITHALL, ‘with his blood’; cp. note to I. 3. 5. ¶ 57 THEIR GUILT is a grim jest: such puns were more acceptable to EL. ears than to ours. The same play of meaning is found in Hen. 5 II. Chor. 26 (cited by Steevens). The insistent knocking, though it cannot be that which is the subject of the Porter’s soliloquy in the scene that follows, nevertheless connects the two scenes. It further carries on the interest of this scene by affording occasion to continue the starts and breaks of thought and rhythm which mark its progress. ¶ 58 HOW IS’T WITH ME, ‘In what condition am I?’ ‘What is the matter with me?’ cp. “you see how all is, i.e. the case stands, things go, with me; *quo in loco sint res et fortunæ meae vides*” Phr. Gen. s.v. ‘how.’ The words show that Macbeth as well as his wife is ignorant of the cause of his delusion. ¶ 59 WHAT, i.e. what sort of, cp. I. 3. 39. The interjection HAH is often

## ACT II SCENE II 60–63

Will all great Neptune’s ocean wash this  
blood

Cleane from my hand? No, this my hand  
will rather

The multitudinous seas incarnadine,  
Making the greene one red.

interrogative in EL. E. and usually so in Shakspeare, cp. N. E. D. 2. It is likely, therefore, that HAH belongs with the first clause rather than with the second: in FO. I it is followed by a colon.

¶ 62 The aptness of the association in MULTITUDINOUS SEAS perhaps accounts for the fact that INCARNADINE now means ‘to stain with

blood’: but before Shakspeare wrote this passage the word meant ‘to make flesh-colored’ or ‘rose-colored’; cp. N. E. D. s.v. A. The Folios read “incarnadine”: but such a spelling is anomalous and here probably a mere misprint. ¶ 63 MAKING THE GREENE ONE RED has occasioned much difficulty to Shakspeare scholars. The phrase is punctuated in the first three Folios with a comma after ONE; evidently the editors of FO. I took GREENE ONE together. The fact that “Greene” and “Red” are capitalized in FO. I may be taken as an indication that they understood “Greene one” to be a reference to Neptune above. Shakspeare speaks of “the greene Neptune” in Wint. T. IV. 4. 28 and in Ant. & Cl. IV. 14. 58; “Mars the red” is a common M. E. phrase, though Shakspeare only once refers to Mars’s color and then indirectly in “as red as Mars his heart” Tro. & Cr. V. 2. 164. Shakspeare may have had in mind the notion of the rosy sea dyeing Neptune in Mars’s color. If one objects to this on the ground that Macbeth would scarcely be guilty of such an artificial metaphor under the circumstances, he must remember that such notions were not so artificial to EL. ears as they are to ours: he must, moreover, be prepared to excuse “incarnadine,” an epithet that was highly artificial in EL. E., as has been pointed out. But another interpretation is possible: “one” is very common in EL. E. as a grammatical substitute for a noun just mentioned, and is often used when in MN. E. such a locution would be avoided; “making the greene one red” can therefore be equivalent to ‘making the green sea red,’ as in Steevens’s citation from Heywood, “He made the green sea red with Turkish blood.” Many modern editors say this reading is ridiculous: but unfortunately their judgement is not always to be trusted as to what is ridiculous or not ridiculous in EL. E.; and when one thinks of the hopelessly absurd idiom that they are from time to time willing to put in Shakspeare’s mouth if they do not happen to understand his EL. phraseology, one can only smile at their eagerness to lay on the printer the burden of their own ignorance. One editor ‘feels instinctively that the passage has been corrupted,’ yet his instinct leads him to ‘surmise that the passage originally read: Making the green zone red’! One might exclaim with Falstaff, ‘Beware instinct!’ Moreover, the substitute

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

proposed, 'making the green uniformly red,' is, as Malone maintained, neither good EL.E. nor good MN.E., however well such a reading may satisfy our modern literary sense. Such a notion takes the form "all one" in M.E. and N.E., with "one" in its M.E. sense of 'same.' "One red" is not in Shakspeare's English the equivalent of 'one uniform redness,' nor are the "total gules" of Ham.11.2.479 and Milton's "one blot" in Comus, v. 133, parallel idioms to "one red." The phraseology of this modern reading—it begins with Johnson, 1795—is therefore as much open to question as is the taste of the Folio reading. That it now passes muster as good English is rather due to the fact that the syntax of the passage, so often quoted with this idea in mind, has become familiar to our ears. It seems better therefore to take "greene" and "one" together than to assume without evidence that the Folio misprints the verse.

## ACT II SCENE II 64-74

ENTER LADY MACBETH

LADY MACBETH

My hands are of your colour, but I shame  
To weare a heart so white.

KNOCKE WITHIN

I heare a knocking

At the south entry: retyre we to our chamber:  
A little water cleares us of this deed:  
How easie is it then! Your constancie  
Hath left you unattended.

KNOCKE WITHIN

Hearke! more knocking:

Get on your night-gowne, least occasion  
call us

And shew us to be watchers: be not lost  
So poorely in your thoughts.

MACBETH

To know my deed 't were best not know  
my selfe.

KNOCKE WITHIN

Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would  
thou could'st!

EXEUNT

¶ 64 YOUR COLOUR, *i.e.* red, cp. v.55 and V.1.48. SHAME: Lady Macbeth can hardly mean that she is ashamed to be such a coward as her husband is: in the Cent. Dict. is cited a sentence from Greene in which the verb seems to mean to 'avoid with a sense of shame': "My master sad—forwhy [*i.e.* wherefore] he shames the court—is fled away" 'Jas. IV' v. 6. Perhaps "shame" has some such meaning here and is used like MN.E. 'scorn' in "to scorn to do."

¶ 68 A similar notion occurs in Sidney's *Arcadia*, p. 293 b, "His mind was evill wayted on by his lamed force," reflecting the EL. psychology referred to in the note on p. 26. Lady Macbeth here and in the last part of v. 64 shows by her words that the knocking creates a panic in Macbeth's mind each time he hears it.

¶ 70 NIGHT-GOWNE here and in V.1.5 is 'dressing-gown,' the usual meaning of the word in EL. E. OCCASION, 'necessity,' as in "My master is awak'd [*i.e.* impelled] by great occasion" Timon 11.2.21. ¶ 71 A WATCHER in EL. E. is not only 'one who watches,' but also 'one who sits up late.' LOST, 'bewildered,' 'not knowing what to do,' as in "I'm lost in it, my lord" Ham. IV.7.55. ¶ 72 POORELY, 'spiritlessly,' cp. "To looke so poorely and to speake so faire" Rich. 2 III.3.128. ¶ 73 TO KNOW MY DEED, 'to know what I am to do': DEED in EL. E. had the sense of 'thing to be done'; cp. N.E.D.3 and especially the quotation from North's Plutarch,



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

"You shall set the poor distressed city of Syracuse again on foot, which is your deed." Macbeth is not thinking of the past, but of the future. Utterly bewildered and horror-stricken, this last knocking rouses only the impatience of impotence and the helpless regret of one who for the first time realizes the irrevocableness of his past action.

## SCENE III: MACBETH'S CASTLE: ENTER A PORTER

I-27

KNOCKING WITHIN

PORTER



HERE'S a knocking indeede! If a man were porter of hell gate, hee should have old turning the key. [KNOCK WITHIN.] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there, i' th' name of Belzebub? Here's a farmer, that hang'd himsele on th' expectation of plentie: come in time; have napkins enow about you; here you 'le sweat for 't. [KNOCK WITHIN.] Knock, knock! Who's there, in th' other devil's name? 'Faith, here's an equivocator, that could sweare in both the scales against eyther scale; who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven: oh, come in, equivocator. [KNOCK WITHIN.] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there? 'Faith, here's an English taylor come hither, for stealing out of a French hose: come in, taylor; here you may rost your goose. [KNOCK WITHIN.] Knock, knock! Never at quiet! What are you?—but this place is too cold for hell: I'le devill-porter it no further. I had thought to have let in some of all professions that goe the primrose way to th' everlasting bonfire. [KNOCK WITHIN.] Anon, anon! I pray you remember the porter.

OPENS THE GATE

¶ 2 HELL GATE, 'the gates of hell': 'hell' here, as in "hell-hound" V.7.32, and in MN.E. "hell-fire," is really a genitive from M.E. "helle," and 'gate' is a plural form from M.E. 'gate'; "hell-kite" IV.3.217, and "hell-broth" IV.1.19, are later imitations of these earlier phrases. ¶ 3 OLD is an EL. expletive word, loosely used for emphasis sake, like our MN.E. "jolly." In MN.E. "high old time" there is perhaps a survival of this EL. E. idiom. Cotgrave under *diable* gives "*faire le diable de vauvert*, to keep an old coyle"; Shakspeare again uses the idiom in "we shal have old swearing" Merch. IV.2.15. ¶ 4 The half-awake porter falls a-dreaming that he is the porter of hell. The allusion in ¶ 6 seems to be to a current jest of the time: it is also found in Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour*, 1599, III. vii: "*Sordido*. Soule, if this [*i.e.* the good weather] hold, we shall shortly have an excellent crop of corne spring out of the high wayes . . . goe to, I'll prevent the sight of it." He then hangs himself, "falls off" the stage direction reads. Malone argued that Shakspeare's words pointed to 1606 as the date of the play because there was prospect of plenty of corn

in the summer and autumn of that year. But the fact that the story had already been used by Jonson in 1599 makes his argument of little weight. ¶ 7 EXPECTATION, 'prospect,'

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

'promise,' cp. "A good plotte, good friends, and full of expectation" 1 Hen. 4 II. 3. 19, and see N. E. D. 4. ¶ 8 COME IN TIME, 'an early arrival,' "come" being the past participle, cp. Phr. Gen. "timely, in time, *mature*." NAPKINS, 'handkerchiefs,' cp. "a napkin or handkerchiefe wherewith wee wipe away the sweate" Baret's *Alvearie* s.v. 'hand'; also Oth. III. 3. 287. The form ENOW in e. N. E. is usually the plural of "enough" as it is here, preserving an O. E. and M. E. form distinction; see N. E. D. s.v. ¶ 9 TO SWEAT FOR 'T IN EL. E., as in MN. E., meant to pay the penalty for a wrong done, see Cent. Dict. ¶ 11 TH' OTHER DEVIL'S NAME that the porter could not recall may have been Behe-moth or Demogorgon, both of which were used as names for devils in mediæval demonology. ¶ 12 The Jesuitical doctrine of equivocation, according to which the making of a false statement under oath was not perjury if the speaker could put any sense, however extravagant, upon the words of which he made use, became prominent at the time of the trial of the Gunpowder conspirators in the spring of 1606; cp. Gardiner's *History*, vol. XI, pp. 281 ff. The mention of TREASON in the connection would indicate that this passage was written after the trial. ¶ 13 SCALES in EL. E. are the scale-pans of the balance. BOTH seems here to be used in the sense of 'either of two,' *uterque*, 'he could swear on either side of the case against the other.' ¶ 19 HOSE, 'breeches,' N. E. D. 2. The peculiar enormity of the tailor's crime consisted in the fact that one kind of French hose "contained neither length, breadth, nor sideness [*i.e.* fullness]" Stubbes's *Anatomie of Abuses*, 1583, ed. Furnivall, p. 56, cited by Cl. Pr. Shakspeare calls them "short blistred breeches" in Hen. 8 I. 3. 31. ¶ 21 AT QUIET is an EL. phrase like 'at rest'; Phr. Gen. gives 'at quiet' as a synonym of 'quiet.' The interrogative WHAT frequently occurs in EL. E. where MN. E. employs 'who.' ¶ 24 The porter's PRIMROSE WAY, which Shakspeare also uses in All's W. IV. 5. 56 and in Ham. I. 3. 50, seems to have been a cant phrase of the time. His notion is something like one in Dekker's *Knight's Conjuring*: "You have of all trades, of all professions, of all states, some there," *i.e.* in hell. There is regret in his I HAD THOUGHT as the morning chill wakens him to the realization that some one is really knocking at his gate. His sleepy ANON, ANON! ('coming, coming!') and his mechanical demand for a gratuity, I PRAY YOU REMEMBER THE PORTER, are touches of nature which only Shakspeare would have given the scene.

¶ 28 Macduff's words call attention to the fact that the porter has over-slept himself; they can be construed into a sort of blank verse—indeed, the whole passage is in that rhythmic prose which EL. dramatists often fall into: such prose differs from poetry in not having a clearly marked coincidence of phrase and verse division. FO. 1 divides in verses: Was . . . bed, That . . . late, 'Faith . . . cock, And . . . things; what follows until Macbeth enters is printed as prose. ¶ 30 THE SECOND COCK, cp. "The second cocke

## ACT II

## SCENE III

28—37

ENTER MACDUFF AND LENOX  
MACDUFF

Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed,  
that you doe lye so late?

PORTER

'Faith, sir, we were carowsing till the second  
cock: and drinke, sir, is a great provoker of  
three things.

MACDUFF

What three things does drinke especially  
provoke?

PORTER

Marry, sir, nose-painting, sleepe and urine.  
Lecherie, sir, it provokes and unprovokes;  
it provokes the desire, but it takes away the

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

ACT II

SCENE III

38-50

performance: therefore much drinke may be said to be an equivocator with lecherie: it makes him and it marres him; it sets him on and it takes him off; it perswades him and disheartens him; makes him stand too and not stand too; in conclusion, equivocates him in a sleepe, and giving him the lye, leaves him.

MACDUFF

I beleewe drinke gave thee the lye last night.

PORTER

That it did, sir, i' the very throat on me: but I requited him for his lye, and, I thinke, being too strong for him, though he tooke up my legges sometime, yet I made a shift to cast him.

MN.E. sense show that the phrase "give the lye" in EL.E. had a double meaning. The N.E.D. throws no light on the difficulty. The notion here seems to be that of 'providing sleeping quarters for,' cp. 'lie' in the sense of 'lodge.' Autolycus's words will bear such a meaning: "it [i.e. lying] becomes none but tradesmen [cp. Stubbes, 'Anatomie of Abuses,' ed. Furnivall, p. 87], and they often give us souldiers the lye, but wee pay them for it with stamped coyne, not stabbing steele, therefore they doe not give us the lye. *Clo.* Your worship had like to have given us one if you had not taken your selfe with the manner [i.e. 'in the act,' playing on 'give' and 'take']. And so here: "giving the lye" has obvious reference to putting one to bed. Shakspeare is fond of punning on the word. At all events, the phrase undoubtedly had to Shakspeare's audience a meaning appropriate to the context, and was not the sheer nonsense that modern editors of Shakspeare are willing to suppose it. ¶46 I' THE THROAT is a common EL. expletive of giving the lie, cp. "you lye in your throat" 2*Hen.* 4. 1. 2. 97, and "gives me the lye i' th' throate As deepe as to the lungs" *Ham.* 11. 2. 601. ON was frequently used in EL.E. where MN.E. requires 'of,' especially in colloquial idiom: MN.E. 'to have the law on one' seems to be due to such syntax. ¶47 LYE in this instance, as *Delius* pointed out, seems to mean 'a fall in wrestling,' echoing the sense of the word in v. 45. No such meaning is given in N.E.D. nor any such wrestling term as TAKE UP ONE'S LEGS; but that this is the reference seems clear from CAST, 'to throw in wrestling,' N.E.D. 13. The quibble turns on this meaning and that in N.E.D. 25; Ben Jonson has a similar quibble in *Every Man in his Humour* 1. iv, using the word as referring to the laying of a stake in gambling as well as to the disturbance of the stomach caused by excessive drinking: "You shall find him with two cushions under his head . . . as though he had neither won nor lost, and yet I warrant he ne're cast better in his life than he has done tonight. *Mat.* Why? was he drunke?" Such quibbling as this of the porter's was conventional for clowns and rustics on the EL. stage, cp. the clowns in *Wint. T.* and *Hamlet* and the dialogue between the porter and his man in *Hen.* 8. v. 4, where the porter's obscenity is even worse than it is here. That EL. notions of propriety were not shocked by such language is evident

hath crow'd . . . 't is three a clocke" *Rom. & Jul.* IV. 4. 3 (cited by Malone). ¶36 EL.E. *un-* in composition frequently means to undo the effect connoted by the verb with which it is compounded. ¶40 SETS ON, 'eggs on.' ¶41 TAKES OFF, cp. "He endeavors to take me off, *operam dat ut me abstrahat*" *Coles.* ¶42 STAND TOO, 'maintain one's ground': the form distinction between 'to' and 'too' is modern. ¶43 IN sometimes in EL.E. corresponds to MN.E. 'into,' cp. 1. 3. 126. This seems to be its sense here. ¶44 There is undoubtedly a double meaning in the porter's words: Autolycus makes a similar jest in *Wint. T.* IV. 4. 745, where the unsuccessful efforts to explain or emend the passage into



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

from the fact that it occurs in the work of the best dramatists. Shakspeare in this respect is neither better nor worse than his time. It is interesting to find in Jonson's arraignment of the indecency of contemporary dramatic literature words and expressions which to our modern ears are, to say the least, indelicate. How really indecent the drama can be, and yet strictly conform to correct notions of propriety in its phraseology, our modern stage, alas! will bear eloquent testimony. Indecency of language is quite another thing from indecency of imagination, and in judging of the moral tone of EL. or M.E. literature we must be careful to make the distinction clearly if we would escape the imputation of hypocrisy.

¶ 48 HERE HE COMES shows that the scene takes place in the porter's lodge or near it. ¶ 49 GOOD MORROW, the conventional salutation 'Good morning,' cp. I. 5. 62. ¶ 51 TIMELY, 'early,' cp. note to v. 8 and "The beds i' th' east are soft and thanks to you, That cal'd me time-lieker then my purpose hither" Ant. & Cl. II. 6. 51. ¶ 52 SLIPT THE HOURE, 'let slip the appointment,' cp. "And we . . . Had slipt our claime untill another age" 3 Hen. 6 II. 2. 161. ¶ 54 ONE, i.e. a trouble. The sentence stress upon "one" seems unusual to modern ears: possibly no contraction of IT IS was intended. ¶ 55 PHYSICKS, 'heals,' cp. "it is [see I. 4. 58] a gallant child, one that indeed physicks the subject" Wint. T. I. 1. 42. PAINE, 'trouble,' cp. "The paine be mine but thine shal be the praise" Sonn. XXXVIII. 14. ¶ 56 SO is frequently used in EL. E. without its correlative "as" before a following infinitive, cp. "So

## ACT II SCENE III 47\*-58

ENTER MACBETH

MACDUFF

Is thy master stirring?  
Our knocking has awak'd him; here he comes.

LENOX

Good morrow, noble sir.

MACBETH

Good morrow, both.

MACDUFF

Is the king stirring, worthy thane?

MACBETH

Not yet.

MACDUFF

He did command me to call timely on him:  
I have almost slipt the houre.

MACBETH

I'll bring you to him.

MACDUFF

I know this is a joyfull trouble to you;  
But yet 't is one.

MACBETH

The labour we delight in physicks paine.  
This is the doore.

MACDUFF

I'll make so bold to call,  
For 't is my limited service.

EXIT MACDUFF

LENOX

Goes the king hence to day?

MACBETH

He does: he did appoint so.

\* The text returns to the standard numeration.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

ACT II SCENE III 59-68

LENOX

The night has been unruly: where we lay,  
Our chimneys were blowne downe, and, as  
they say,  
Lamentings heard i' th' ayre, strange  
schreemes of death  
And prophecying, with accents terrible,  
Of dyre combustion and confus'd events  
New hatch'd to th' wofull time: the obscure  
bird  
Clamor'd the live-long night: some say, the  
earth  
Was fevorous and did shake.

MACBETH

'T was a rough night.

LENOX

My young remembrance cannot paralell  
A fellow to it.

'Anat. of Mel.' I. ii. 2. 5. LAY of course means 'lodged' as in I. 2. 20. ¶ 61 DEATH in EL. E. can mean 'bloodshed,' 'murder,' cp. N. E. D. 6 and "Death or slaughter of man or beast, *occisio, caedes*" Phr. Gen.; so that SCHREEMES OF DEATH corresponds to MN. E. 'shrieks of murder.' The *ee* seems to be anomalous, pointing to the sound *i* rather than *e* when the Folio was printed. But *e* before *n* and *r* was in many instances a close vowel toward the end of the 16th century, and it may be that after *r* also the change was taking place. ¶ 62 PROPHECYING is probably an adjective limiting "schreemes" and connected with "strange," i.e. 'screams of death strange and prophesying combustion,' etc.; such word order was not uncommon in EL. E., and is preserved in MN. E. phrases like "good men and true," cp. "a wise man and of great pollicy" Bacon's Atlantis, 30, 18 (ed. Moore-Smith); see also the citation from I Hen. 4 in the note to v. 7. The word "prophecying" is of three syllables, see note to I. 6. 6. ¶ 63 OF is often used in EL. E. before the direct object of present active participles; the idiom now survives only in dialect English. COMBUSTION, 'political confusion,' 'tumult,' a sense of the word which, according to N. E. D., was very common in the 16th and 17th centuries, but is now somewhat unusual; cp. "kindling such a combustion in the state" Hen. 8 v. 4. 51. CONFUS'D may have the meaning 'full of confusion,' 'distracting,' for adjectives formed by the suffix *-ed* had such wide range of meaning in EL. E. that they often corresponded to MN. E. present participles, cp. I. 6. 5, "dishonored [i.e. dishonouring] peace" Drayton, 'Barrons W.' IV. 4. 2; "these thraled [i.e. enthralling] dumps" 'Faire Em' I. I. 25; "A custome More honour'd in the breach then the observance" Ham. I. 4. 15. ¶ 64 NEW HATCH'D: Malone aptly compared this with the passage cited in note to I. 3. 58; but, failing to see that "such things become the hatch and brood of time" shows that TO here refers to time as the mother of events, he construed the preposition in the sense of 'to suit.'

good, sir, to rise" Meas. IV. 3. 29. LIMITED, 'appointed,' cp. "having the houre limited and an expresse command" Meas. IV. 2. 175. As far as the language goes it is not necessary to suppose that Macduff was a 'lord of the bed-chamber': he merely says that he has an early appointment with the king. ¶ 59 When one thinks of what was happening at the time, this picture of the storm adds new horror to the idea of Duncan's murder. Shakspeare in representing it here may have had in mind a popular notion like that reflected in 'Besides, the devil many times takes his opportunity of such storms, and when the humours of the air be stirred he goes in with them, exagitates our spirits and vexeth our souls; as the sea waves, so are the spir-its and humours in our bod-ies tossed with tempestuous winds and storms' Burton,

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

The perplexing events can surely be thought of as being already hatched but not grown to maturity. OBSCURE has word stress on the first syllable, like "oblique" in "By oblique glance of his licentious pen" Jonson, 'Sejanus' III.1; it has this stress in Merch. II.7.51 also, "In the obscure grave." The word is here used in its sense of 'haunting the darkness,' cp. "with obscure wing Scout far and wide" Milton, 'Paradise Lost' II. 132 (Cent. Dict.); Shakspeare speaks of the "nightly [*i.e.* night-loving] owle" in Titus II.

3.97. ¶65 CLAMOR'D in EL. E. had not the association of rapidly repeated sounds which it has in MN. E., but could well describe the owl's hooting: it is used of wailing in I.7.78. ¶66 FEVOROUS, cp. "feavorous life" Meas. III.1.75; in Shakspeare's time the word suggested the shaking of an ague as well as high temperature of the blood. ¶67 PARALELL, 'bring into comparison with,' cp. "I had thought once to have parallell him with the great Alexander" Jonson, 'Sejanus' I.1. (Cent. Dict.).

¶69 Such chiasmic constructions as this were a common ornament of style in EL. writers. ¶71 CONFUSION, 'ruin,' as in "Make large confusion and, thy fury spent, Confounded be thy selfe" Timon IV.3.127. HIS, 'its.' ¶72 MOST SACRILEGIOUS: superlatives were very frequently used absolutely in EL. E., *e.g.* "most glorious exploits of warre" Florio's Montaigne, I.23; "chastest bed of mine" Sidney, 'Arcadia' p. 173. ¶73 ANOYNTED: it is not necessary to suppose that the metaphor is confused as Delius does: "anointed" is used in EL. E. as a synonym for 'consecrated,' cp. "Barring the anointed liberty of laws" Daniel, 'Civil War' III.23 (cited by N. E. D.). The word has a peculiar fitness here in its reference to the king as the Lord's anointed, cp. I Sam. XXIV.10 (Cl. Pr.). Richard calls himself the Lord's anointed in Rich.3 IV.4.150 (Herford). ¶74 THE LIFE O' TH' BUILDING seems to be a recollection of "For ye are the temple of the living God" II Cor. VI.16 (Cl. Pr.). To "reave of life" is an old association in English, and Shakspeare makes frequent use of it. The notion of the temple and the "life of the building" may have a remote association with the vestal fire. Shakspeare speaks of breaking within the "bloody [*i.e.* full of blood] house of life" in John IV.2.210, and of

## ACT II SCENE III 69-74

ENTER MACDUFF

MACDUFF

O horror, horror, horror! tongue nor heart  
Cannot conceive nor name thee.

MACBETH AND LENOX

What's the matter?

MACDUFF

Confusion now hath made his master-peece:  
Most sacrilegious murther hath broke ope  
The Lord's anoynted temple, and stole thence  
The life o' th' building.

## ACT II SCENE III 74-78

MACBETH

What is 't you say? the life?

LENOX

Meane you his majestie?

MACDUFF

Approch the chamber, and destroy your sight  
With a new Gorgon: doe not bid me speake;  
See, and then speake your selves. Awake,  
awake!

EXEUNT MACBETH AND LENOX



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

the "empty casket where the jewell of life By some damn'd hand was rob'd" in John V. 1.40. ¶ 76 SIGHT is here used in its now somewhat restricted sense of 'power of seeing.' ¶ 77 Shakspeare did not necessarily draw the GORGON notion from Ovid: we may surely suppose him familiar with the classic mythology of his time. As a boy at school

## ACT II SCENE III 79-91

Ring the alarum bell! Murther and treason!  
Banquo and Donalbaine! Malcolme! awake!  
Shake off this downey sleepe, death's counterfeited,

And looke on death it selfe! up, up, and see  
The great doomes image! Malcolme!  
Banquo!

As from your graves rise up, and walke like  
sprights

To countenance this horror. Ring the bell!

BELL RINGS. ENTER LADY MACBETH

LADY MACBETH

What's the businesse,  
That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley  
The sleepers of the house? speake, speake!

MACDUFF

O gentle lady,  
'T is not for you to heare what I can speake:  
The repetition in a woman's eare  
Would murther as it fell.

The N.E.D. takes COUNTENANCE here as meaning 'to keep in countenance,' a sense of the word for which this passage alone is cited; it is rather the appearance and actions of Malcolm and Banquo as haunting spirits, and not the persons themselves, that Shakspeare is putting before the mind; so the word may have the meaning given in N.E.D. 4, especially that illustrated in the quotation from Laneham's Letter, "who for parsonage [EL. form of 'personage'] gesture and utterauns beside countenaunst the matter too ['to'] very good liking"; cp., too, 2Hen.4 IV. 1.35. It is a play that Macduff is thinking of, and he adds the figure as he calls to Malcolm and Banquo and Donalbaine to rise from their "downey sleepe"—RISE UP is used as in "they rose up early" Mids. IV. 1.137; cp. "the graves all gaping wide, Every one lets forth his spright" Mids. V. 1.387. Macduff's words may contain a suspicion that Banquo and Malcolm also have been murdered. RING THE BELL has been frequently taken by editors for a stage direction that has slipped into the text; but the words may well be a natural expression of impatience at the slowness with which the alarm spreads through the castle. ¶ 86 BUSINESSE, 'commotion,' 'tumult,' cp. N.E.D. 7 b and its citation from Holinshed, "Argudus sent forth . . with a power to appease this business." This, dated 1587, is the latest quotation in N.E.D.;

he would have been stupid indeed if he had not known the Medusa fable, and the story was accessible to him in almost any Latin dictionary of his time.

¶ 79 The castle bell summoned all the retainers and servants, cp. V. 5.51. ¶ 81 Shakspeare, in order to heighten the horror of Macbeth's doom, 'sleep no more,' all through this play introduces associations of softness and quietness when speaking of sleep, even when such notions are unnatural and artificial as here. COUNTERFEIT, 'portrait,' N.E.D. 3. In Wint. T. V. 3.18 Paulina with the words "prepare To see the life as lively mock'd as ever Still sleepe mock'd death" draws the curtain and shows Hermione standing like a statue. ¶ 83 IMAGE, 'representation,' cp. "This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna" Ham. III. 2.248. ¶ 84 SPRIGHT and "spirit" are different forms of the same word in EL.E. ¶ 85

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

but in Phr. Gen. (a century later) "Business or trouble" is glossed *turba, tumultus*: the same gloss occurs in Holyoke, 1677. ¶87 TO PARLEY, 'to conference'; cp. "Our trumpet call'd you to this gentle parle" John II.205. ¶88 SPEAKE, SPEAKE! Of two succeeding imperatives the second receives a heavier stress than the first, so the verse is quite rhythmical, though Macduff's words make it one of six waves. ¶90 REPETITION, 'utterance,' cp. "if it should be told The repetition cannot make it lesse" Lucr. 1284, the utterance of a thought being conceived as a repetition of its form. Macduff's unsuspicious concern for Lady Macbeth's womanly feelings heightens the interest of the situation.

## ACT II SCENE III 91-101

ENTER BANQUO

O Banquo, Banquo!

Our royall master's murther'd.

LADY MACBETH

Woe, alas!

What, in our house?

BANQUO

Too cruell any where!

Deare Duff, I prythee contradict thy selfe,  
And say it is not so.

ENTER MACBETH, LENOX, AND ROSSE

MACBETH

Had I but dy'd an houre before this chance,  
I had liv'd a blessed time; for from this instant  
There's nothing serious in mortalitie:  
All is but toyes: renowne and grace is dead;  
The wine of life is drawne, and the meere lees  
Is left this vault to brag of.

ENTER MALCOLME AND DONALBAIN

¶93 Surely IN OUR HOUSE may be taken in its natural sense: 'What! here in the midst of friends? It is impossible!' Lady Macbeth's words, thus addressed to Banquo, are probably intended to forestall a suspicion that Duncan's being in Macbeth's house had anything to do with his murder. Banquo's TOO CRUELL ANY WHERE, 'a deed of savagery even if committed by his enemies,' answers Lady Macbeth's exclamation. His epithet CRUELL in MN.E. seems weak; but in EL.E. the adjective meant 'wild, fierce, savage,' N.E.D.2. ¶94 PRYTHEE and 'prethee' were common EL. forms of 'pray thee,' the diphthong being weakened by its lack of stress. ¶95 The difference between an entrance and a re-

entrance is not noted in the Folio stage directions. ¶96 CHANCE in EL.E. often means 'misfortune,' 'calamity'; cp. "Ah! what an unkind houre Is guiltie of this lamentable chance!" Rom.&Jul. V.3.145. ¶98 SERIOUS, 'important,' 'of value'; cp. "our rash faults Make triviall price of serious things we have" All's W. V.3.60. ¶99 ALL, a common EL.E. idiom for the 'sum of things,' 'everything.' TOYES: the EL. sense of the word as used here has gone over to MN.E. 'trifles,' i.e. meaningless nothings; later Macbeth will strangely come to realize the truth of his words, "Life . . is a tale Told by an ideot, full of sound and fury, Signifying nothing" V.5.26. ¶100 LEES, as in MN.E., is usually plural, but Shakspeare has used it here as a collective noun. ¶101 VAULT is here used in a double sense, 'wine-vault' and 'earth.' ¶96 ff. Such highly wrought language as Macbeth employs did not offend Elizabethan taste. Hamlet, in I.5.29, when he hears of his father's murder, declares that he will sweep to his revenge "with wings as swift As meditation or the thoughts of love." Othello, V.2.350, declares that his eyes, 'subdued' by his sorrows, "Drops teares as fast as th'Arabian trees Their medicinable gumme." Highly wrought phraseology was an every-day matter in the Elizabethan age.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

ACT II SCENE III 102-119

DONALBAINE

What is amisse?

MACBETH

You are, and doe not know't:

The spring, the head, the fountaine of your blood

Is stopt; the very source of it is stopt.

MACDUFF

Your royall father's murther'd.

MALCOLME

Oh, by whom?

LENOX

Those of his chamber, as it seem'd, had done't:

Their hands and faces were all badg'd with blood;

So were their daggers, which unwip'd we found

Upon their pillows:

They star'd, and were distracted; no man's life Was to be trusted with them.

MACBETH

O, yet I doe repent me of my furie,  
That I did kill them.

MACDUFF

Wherefore did you so?

MACBETH

Who can be wise, amaz'd, temp'rate and furious,

Loyall and neutrall, in a moment? No man:  
Th' expedition of my violent love

Out-run the pawser, reason. Here lay Duncan,

His silver skinne lac'd with his golden blood,  
And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature

¶ 102 AMISSE, in its reference to Malcolme, seems to mean 'ataloss.' ¶ 103 HEAD, i.e. fountainhead. ¶ 105 Malcolme's first question BY WHOM? must have been a shock to Macbeth. ¶ 107 BADG'D, cp. "Steep'd in the colours of their trade" v. 121. ¶ 110 DISTRACTED, 'mad,' 'crazed,' 'insane,' N.E.D. 5. ¶ 113 Something in Macbeth's manner must have aroused Macduff's suspicions to make him put this direct question. ¶ 114 Enough of the M.E. meaning of 'prudent,' 'having presence of mind,' must have clung to the word WISE in EL.E. to justify Macbeth's contrasting it with "amaz'd." Baret gives it the meaning *sollers* as well as *sapiens* and *prudens*. AMAZ'D, 'dazed,' 'stupid,' N.E.D. 1. TEMP'RATE, i.e. self-controlled. ¶ 115 NEUTRALL, 'indifferent,' cp. "one that's of a newtrall heart" Lear III. 7. 48. IN A MOMENT, i.e. at the same instant. 'Moment' in MN.E. usually means 'a brief space of time' as distinct from 'instant.' In EL.E. "in a moment" is equivalent to "in the twinkling of an eye" as the Phr. Gen. explains it. ¶ 116 EXPEDITION, i.e. haste, swiftness. ¶ 117 OUT-RUN: 'run' is a regular past tense of 'run' in M.E. and EL.E. PAWSER is neither a noun of agent in -er meaning 'one who makes to pause,' nor an adjective meaning 'slower,' as it is usually explained: but an EL. noun meaning 'loiterer,' cp. Cotgrave, "*musard*, a pawser, lingerer, deferrer, delayer," and "*rumineur*, one that deliberates or pauses on a matter": Coles also glosses "a



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

pauser on, *meditator*"; and Hamlet's "must give us pawse," i.e. must make us deliberate, III. 1. 68. ¶ 118 SILVER, i.e. pure white, cp. "silver cheekes" Lucr. 61. The word still means 'white' in silver maple, silver birch, silver dawn. LAC'D: Cotgrave defines *chamaré* "laced thick all over; aslope, ore-crosse, or billetwise," showing that the word refers to reticulate ornamentation by interlaced bars or cords. In

## ACT II SCENE III 120-124

For ruines wastfull entrance: there the  
murtherers,  
Steep'd in the colours of their trade, their  
daggers

Unmannerly breech'd with gore: who could  
refraine,

That had a heart to love, and in that heart  
Courage to make 's love knowne?

Rom.&Jul. III. 5. 7, "envious streaks Do lace the severing [i.e. parting] cloudes in yonder east," the word aptly describes the effect of dawn streaks crossing bars of low-lying cirrus clouds. GOLDEN, 'red,' cp. note to II. 2. 56 and Lucr. 57 ff. Macbeth's words with their EL. associations are not artificial, though it is little wonder that they should be thought far fetched when one understands "laced" as meaning 'covered with lace-work' and ignores the association of redness that attached to "golden" in EL.E. With such an interpretation one can sympathize with Johnson, who, with his usual intolerance of what he could not understand, and in despair of patching the verse into what he thought good English,—for it is a difficult line to amend, as Warburton's 'laqu'd' for 'laced' clearly shows,—pronounced the passage hopeless and not to be amended 'but by a general blot.' ¶ 119 NATURE, 'life,' as frequently; the figure seems to be the same as that in "Poore soule, the center of my sinfull earth, [Hemmed by] these rebbell powres that thee array" Sonn. CXLVI. 1. ¶ 120 WASTFULL is used in its common EL. sense of 'devastating,' cp. "When wastefull warre shall statues overturne" Sonn. LV. 5. ¶ 122 UNMANNERLY BREECH'D WITH GORE: the words have been the subject of much controversy. The attempts at explanation worth considering are (1) that Shakspeare thought of the blades of the daggers as indecently covered with blood instead of properly sheathed in their scabbards; (2) that "breech" is used for 'hilt' in EL.E.; and (3) that the phrase is misprinted. In making good the last explanation the emendations proposed are 'unmanly rech'd' (explained as meaning 'soiled with dark yellow') Warburton; 'unmanly drenched' Johnson; 'unmannerly hatched' Seward; 'in a manner lay drenched' Heath (the two latter are good illustrations of the emendatorial instinct!); 'unmanly breech'd' Travers; etc. If the necessity for emendation is once granted the easiest and most natural word for Shakspeare to have used would have been 'imbrewed,' cp. Baret's *Alvearie*, "to imbrue, or make foule, to smeere, or make foule round about, *oblino*"; "to imbrue or die with some colour, *im-buo*"; "to imbrue his handes with blood, *sanguine respergere dextram*." Baret also gives "embrew, *ferrum tingere sanguine*"; "all bloudie, all embrewed with blood, *perfusus cruore*"; "to embrew the harnesse with blood"; "daughters embrewed with the blood of their mother." There was an aphetic form of the word, viz. 'brewed,' 'brued,' 'brude,' two instances of which are cited in N.E.D. from literature of Shakspeare's time. This 'brew'd,' written in a handwriting in which the right arm of the *w* had a curving ascender, as, e.g., in Queen Elizabeth's, might have looked like 'breech'd' written with an *h* which did not go below the line, a form of the letter not unusual in EL. manuscripts. But even granting this, there still remains the fact that 'unmannerly' is hardly the word to go with 'embrewed' or 'brew'd.' As to the second explanation: there is no evidence that 'breeched' was used in EL.E. for the hilt of a dagger, see N.E.D.; and if there was, 'hilted with gore' would of itself require a deal of explanation to make it intelligible. We are forced to conclude, for the present at least, that the words are as Shakspeare

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

wrote them. The "strippe your sword starke naked" Tw.N. III.4.274, cited by Cl.Pr., presents a similar figurative phraseology, though one not so violent as 'breeched with gore.' "Breeches" in EL.E. described the long hose of the time as well as that part of the clothing which we now know as breeches. Shakspeare has used the florid idiom of EL.E. in the early part of the passage, describing Duncan's appearance in terms of EL. dress; it is likely that he would continue the same idiom in the latter part of his contrast. UNMANNERLY means 'boorish,' 'vulgar,' 'rustic,' in EL.E. "Unmannerly breech'd with gore" may thus easily describe the lower parts of the daggers, their blades, indently and only partially covered with clotted blood and not properly clad with scabbards as they should have been. As we have already pointed out, Shakspeare in using such highly figurative language as this was but following the custom of his time. In EL.E. it was scarcely possible to think at all without falling into the rich idiom then current. Even the sober writers on theology constantly employ forms of expression that to our notions are absurdly and grotesquely overwrought. Bacon, accurate and scientific as he is, constantly employs figurative idiom in his closest reasoning. Such books, too, as Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Sidney's *Arcadia*, and Lyly's *Euphues*—very gardens of florid phraseology—were not frowned at, but considered to be the highest literary achievement of their time. A look into Puttenham will show pages of prescription in which these usages are reduced to classic rule and method. Shakspeare, it is true, in employing figurative language usually weaves it into his thought so that his word associations are rarely far fetched and dear bought; but the modern editor is not justified in botching the text when-

ever he finds a figure loosely thrown into the context.

## ACT II SCENE III 124-125

LADY MACBETH

Helpe me hence, hoa!

MACDUFF

Looke to the lady.

¶ 124 MAKE'S, 'make his,' another of those enclitic pronominal contractions so common in EL.E., cp. "betray's" I.3.125, "under't" I.5.67, and note to I.6.24.

¶ 124 The fainting fit of Lady Macbeth interrupts the

dialogue and for the moment throws the scene into confusion. The stage business must be supplied by conjecture from the context: not even the 'Lady Macbeth is carried out' below is to be found in FO.I, and Davenant alters the action entirely. HELPE ME HENCE indicates that Lady Macbeth tries to get away, and as faintness overpowers her calls for her servants. Whether she succeeds in leaving the stage or not would probably depend on the actors' interpretation of the scene; if she does Macbeth must have run to her assistance, returning in v. 139, and Macduff's and Banquo's LOOKE TO THE LADY are to be taken as directions to the excited servants coming on the stage in answer to the HOA! If Lady Macbeth swoons upon the stage Macbeth and the others surround her and carry her out, Malcolm and Donalbaine drawing apart and conversing with one another in asides. That Lady Macbeth should really swoon, 'murdered by the repetition in her woman's ears' of the ghastly and bloody details of Duncan's murder, introduces no inconsistency. In all the devilish fury of her purposes, we are never allowed quite to forget that she is a woman. Her language is womanly even in her terrible soliloquy, and her inability wholly to control her sentiment comes clearly forth in "Had he not resembled my father as he slept, I had don't." Her "undaunted metal" is only intellectual, a quick intelligence and a shrewd mind grasping a situation with masculine vigour: emotionally she is still the woman. That Macbeth should not take part in the dialogue here has been over-subtly construed by some critics as an evidence of his indifference. But these critics do not tell us what Macbeth should have said. If the scene is naturally construed surely his silence means the very opposite of indifference.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶126 MOST is used in its EL. absolute sense and corresponds to MN.E. 'best.' ARGUMENT, 'theme,' 'subject of conversation,' cp. "could thou and I rob thee thees . . it would be argument for a weeke" 1Hen.4 II. 2. 99.

¶127 SHOULD illustrates the EL.E. and M.E. usage of the auxiliary in the sense of 'can,' 'may,' expressing possibility from a subjective point of view; MN.E. uses 'may' in this idiom, but constantly confuses it with 'can,' despite grammatical injunctions; cp. "What should he be?" i.e. 'Who may he be?' IV.3.49, and "Where shold this musick be?" i.e. 'Where can it be?' 'Where are we to look for it?' Temp. I. 2. 387. FATE, as in "If to my sword his fate be not the glory" Tro.&Cr. IV. I. 26, is here used in its sense of 'death,' 'ruin.' Staunton's emendation 'hide we in an auger-hole' in order to avoid the notion of 'Fate lying perdu in an auger-hole' is therefore quite unnecessary. ¶128 The EL. word AUGURE HOLE, like MN.E. 'knot-hole,' denoted any small orifice, cp. "To creep into an auger-hole to hide their heads" Dent, 1601, cited in N. E. D., and "the like illusion is of their phantasie in . . creeping thorow augur-holes" Jonson's Masque of Queenes, note in ed. 1640, p. 169; "augor's boare" is used in the same way in Cor. IV.

6. 87 (cited by Steevens). ¶129 For LET US FO.I reads "Let's." The verse division of FO.I for vv. 127 to 130 is What . . here, Where . . hole, May . . away, Our . . brew'd, Nor . . sorrow, Upon . . motion. Modern editors usually make two verses of Let's away, Our . . brew'd. But by reading "Let us" as in the text the broken verses disappear. For SORROW as a monosyllable, cp. "follow" in I.6.11; words ending in -ow had monosyllabic forms in e.N.E., and many of them seem to be so used in EL. poetry. The 'brewing' of rain and showers is not an uncommon figure in M.E. and e.N.E., and such an extension of the notion as the 'brewing of tears' is not unnatural in EL.E. It

ACT II

SCENE III

125-138

MALCOLME

ASIDE TO DONALBAINE

Why doe we hold our tongues,  
That most may clayme this argument for  
ours?

DONALBAINE

ASIDE TO MALCOLME

What should be spoken here, where our fate,  
Hid in an augure hole, may rush and seize us?  
Let us away; our teares are not yet brew'd.

MALCOLME

ASIDE TO DONALBAINE

Nor our strong sorrow upon the foot of  
motion.

130, 131

BANQUO

Looke to the lady:

131

LADY MACBETH IS CARRIED OUT

And when we have our naked frailties hid,  
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,  
And question this most bloody piece of worke,  
To know it further. Feares and scruples  
shake us:

In the great hand of God I stand, and thence  
Against the undivulg'd pretence I fight  
Of treasonous mallice.

MACDUFF

And so doe I.

ALL

So all.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

occurs also in Titus III. 2. 38 (cited by Delius). STRONG in EL. E. often connotes what in MN. E. would be described as 'violent.' UPON THE FOOT OF is an EL. phrase meaning 'ready to start upon,' see N. E. D. s.v. 'foot' 29; MOTION is used by Malcolm in its EL. psychological meaning of 'expression,' cp. "in thy face strange motions have appeared" I Hen. 4 II. 3. 63. ¶ 132 NAKED FRAILTIES is probably a reference to the effect of the morning chill upon the half-clad actors in the scene; but Banquo's words may have a deeper application, since "naked frailty" also means 'unprotected weakness'; see N. E. D. 'frailty'—'exposure to the undivulged pretence of treasonous malice' as well as to cold. For HID in the sense of 'shielded,' 'protected,' cp. "having nothing but a cote of thatch to hide them from heaven" Bishop Hall, 1614 (cited in N. E. D. I b). ¶ 134 QUESTION, 'inquire into,' as in I. 3. 43. ¶ 135 SCRUPLES in EL. E. means 'doubts' or 'anxieties' of any sort, and is not restricted to those of conscience. ¶ 136 IN THE GREAT HAND OF GOD: Shakspeare evidently had in mind I Pet. V. 6 ff.: "Humble

## ACT II SCENE III 139–147

### MACBETH

Let's briefly put on manly readinesse,  
And meet i' th' hall together.

### ALL

Well contented.

EXEUNT ALL BUT MALCOLME AND DONALBAINE

### MALCOLME

What will you doe? Let's not consort with  
them:

To shew an unfelt sorrow is an office  
Which the false man do's easie. I'le to Eng-  
land.

### DONALBAINE

To Ireland I; our seperated fortune  
Shall keepe us both the safer: where we  
are

There's daggers in men's smiles: the neere  
in blood,

The neerer bloody.

stage direction to I Hen. 6 II. 1. 39 (cited by Cl. Pr.). The gloss of Phr. Gen. "in readi-ness, *alte præcinctus eit*" is another instance in point. But even without this associa-tion the phrase is clear, cp. "put we on Industrious souldiership" V. 4. 15, "She puts on outward strangeness" Ven. & Ad. 310, "put on feare" Cæs. 1. 3. 60, and "Put on what weary negligence you please" Lear 1. 3. 12. ¶ 140 CONTENTED in EL. E. means 'agreed' as well as 'satisfied'; the king plays on the double meaning of the word in Rich. 2 IV. 1. 200: "Bull. Are you contented to resigne the crowne? Rich. I [i.e. aye], no; no, I." ¶ 142 OFFICE, 'performance of duty,' cp. "you have shewne your father

your selves therefore under the mighty hand of God, . . casting all your care upon him, for hee careth for you. Beesober, bevigilant: because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may deuoure." ¶ 137 PRETENCE, 'intention,' 'purpose,' cp. "the pretence whereof [i.e. the treason] being by circum-stances partly layd open [i.e. divulged]" Wint. T. III. 2. 18, and "Fair knight, . . what is your pretence?" Halle, 'Chronicle,' Hen. VIII, 4. ¶ 138 TREASONOUS is here synocopated to 'treas'nous.'

¶ 139 BRIEFLY, 'without delay,' a common EL. mean-ing of the word, cp. N. E. D. 2, which cites: "Ant. Go put on thy defences. Eros. Briefely, sir" Ant. & Cl. IV. 4. 10. MANLY READINESSE: 'ready' in EL. E. was closely associated with apparel, cp. "Enter severall wayes Bastard, Alanson, Reignier, halfe ready and halfe unready"

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

A child-like office" Lear II. I. 107. ¶ 143 FALSE in this sense of 'treacherous' as an attribute of persons is now usually strengthened by '-hearted.' EASIE is the EL. adverb form without *-ly*. As has already been pointed out, the omission of the verb in expressions denoting motion is common in EL. syntax; cp. also II. 4. 35 ff. ¶ 146 THERE'S is EL. syntax by which a singular verb agrees with a plural subject. THE . . THE is a correlative idiom, descended from the O.E. instrumental case, still in use in MN.E. comparisons with the sense of 'by how much . . by so much.' NEERE is an e.N.E. comparative form which survived from M.E. and means 'nearer': cp. Heywood's proverb, "the neare to the church, the furdur from God" Sp. Soc., p. 152. The whole expression seems to have been proverbial in Shakspeare's time, cp. "Neerer in bloody thoughts [i.e. purposes] and not in blood" Rich. 3 II. 1. 92.

## ACT II SCENE III 147-152

### MALCOLME

This murtherous shaft that's shot  
Hath not yet lighted, and our safest way  
Is to avoid the ayme. Therefore to horse;  
And let us not be daintie of leave-taking,  
But shift away: there's warrant in that theft  
Which steales it selfe when there's no mercie  
left.

EXEUNT

¶ 149 AVOID THE Ayme, 'get away from the mark,' N.E.D. 6; cp. "agarish flagge To be the ayme of every dangerous shot" Rich. 3 IV. 4. 89: nearness of kin to Duncan and not to Macbeth is the ground of Malcolm's dread. Despite Shakspeare's marvelous skill in the development of his theme, modern editors

will have it that this remark of Malcolm's—indeed the whole scene—reveals a universal suspicion of Macbeth, the fastening of which upon him is avoided only by the timely fainting fit of Lady Macbeth. But we must remember that only Banquo is in a position to suspect the real author of the crime, and he cannot bring himself definitely to avow, even in soliloquy, aught more than vague suspicion; he has been too much impressed by the witches' prophecy as it concerns himself to resist the course of events, cp. III. 1. 1 ff. And Macbeth in III. 1. 48 ff. does not so much fear Banquo's suspicion as he does the fulfilment of the witches' prophecy that makes Banquo the father of a line of kings. It is the doubtful joy of his success as tainted by this thought that nerves him to the new murder. ¶ 150 LEAVE-TAKING seems to have had the word stress upon its second member in EL.E. ¶ 151 SHIFT is glossed *evado* in Coles, cp. "Oh Mistris, Mistris, shift and save your selfe" Err. V. 1. 168; it was also a euphemism for practising knavery, cp. Merry W. 1. 3. 37, hence the turn of Malcolm's words which follow. The same notion occurs in All's W. II. 1. 33 (cited by Delius): "*Ber*. By heaven! I'll steale away. *I Lord*. There's honour in the theft"; cp. also Sonn. XCII. 1.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SCENE IV

This closing scene of Act II is not really a part of the play's dramatic action, but rather serves the purpose of a chorus, bridging over the gap between Act II, which leaves Macbeth having successfully accomplished the murder, and Act III, which presents him in the full enjoyment of the fruits of his crime. It has a double and typical chorus theme, narrating how the bloody act affects the powers above and how it affects men below—the divine and the human aspects of the tragedy. The first theme is unfolded in vv. 1-20, the second in vv. 21-41. Intervening thus between the two chief divisions of the tragedy,

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

the bloody deed and the retribution, it binds them together, furnishing an epilogue to Act II and a prologue to Act III. In its epilogue character it reflects the apparent success of Macbeth's plot; in its prologue character it forecasts the retribution of the powers of heaven through their agent Macduff. In its latter aspect it contrasts with the prologue scene to the first part of the play, whose theme was the powers of darkness brooding over the action of the tragedy.

## SCENE IV: OUTSIDE MACBETH'S CASTLE

ENTER ROSSE WITH AN OLD MAN

I — 10

OLD MAN



TWELVESCORE and ten I can remember well:

Within the volume of which time  
I have seene

Houres dreadfull and things  
strange; but this sore night  
Hath trifled former knowings.

ROSSE

Ha, good father,

Thou seest the heavens, as troubled with  
man's act,

Threatens his bloody stage: by th' clock 't is  
day,

And yet darke night strangles the travailing  
lampe:

Is't night's predominance, or the dayes shame,  
That darknesse does the face of earth in-  
tombe,

When living light should kisse it?

¶ 1 A similar ellipsis occurs in 2Hen.4 III. 2. 51 ff.: "a [i.e. he] would have clapt in the clowt [i.e. hit the nail] at twelve-score [i.e. yards], and carryed you a fore-hand shaft at foureteene [i.e. fourteen score yards] and foureteene and a halfe." While still frequent in MN. E. in giving time, age, or date, it would not now be employed in such an idiom as this. ¶ 3 SORE, 'grievous': this original sense of the word is now obsolete save in 'sore trouble.' ¶ 4 TRIFLED, 'made a jest of,' cp. "How dothe oure bysshop trifle and mock us" Berners's Froissart I. cc. (quoted by Cent. Dict.). But in this sense the word is rare and a nonce-usage in Shakspere. KNOWINGS, not 'knowledge' but 'experiences,' cp. "gentlemen of your knowing" Cym. I. 4. 29 (cited by Cl. Pr.); the substantive is vi-

dently founded on 'know' in the sense of 'to experience' N.E.D. 5 c, as is EL. "havings" from 'have.' FATHER is still a term of respect, less familiar than 'uncle,' applied to an old man; Menenius says, "He call'd me fater," in Cor. V. I. 3, cp. N.E.D. 8. ¶ 5 SEEST in e.N.E. is a monosyllable regularly developed from M.E. "sest": 'se-est' is a modern form. Rosse's thought, like Macbeth's in I. 3. 127 ff., is couched in the technical language of the theatre. The canopy of the stage in the EL. theatre was called the HEAVENS, see N.E.D. s.v. 8. The fact that the stage was hung with black for the performance of tragedies—cp. "Blacke stage for tragedies and murthers fell" Lucr. 766—explains Rosse's allusion to the darkness. ACT in EL. E. often corresponds to MN. E. 'action,' 'activity,' a meaning still preserved in 'act of God,' cp. N.E.D. 4. ¶ 6 The THREATENS of FO. I is altered by modern editors to 'threaten' in order to make Shak-



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

spere conform to MN. rules of grammar; but "heavens" seems sometimes to have been a collective noun in EL.E., cp. IV.3.231. ¶7 LAMPE, i.e. the sun, cp. N.E.D.2, especially the quotation from Dunbar: "Phebus the radius [i.e. radiant] lamp diurn." The notion occurs also in 3Hen.6 II.1.31, "one lampe, one light, one sunne." The association of the TRAVAILING sun is not an unusual one in Shakspeare and contemporary poets, cp. "Now is the sun upon the highmost hill Of this daies journey" Rom.&Jul. II.5.9; the "weary sun" occurs several times in Shakspeare. Dyce cites Drayton, 'Elegies,' p. 185, ed. 1627: "nor regard him [i.e. the sun] travelling the signes," and adds that the notion is traceable to Ps.XIX.5—rather to Ps.XIX.6: "His going foorth is from the ende of the heaven, and his circuite unto the endes of it." Travel, 'to go on a journey,' and travail, 'to toil,' were not distinguished by different spellings until after Shakspeare's time. ¶8 PREDOMINANCE, 'astrological influence,' cp. "Foolles by heavenly compulsion, knaves, theeves, and treachers by sphericall predominance, drunkards, lyars, and adulterers by an enforc'd obedience of planatary influence" Lear 1.2.132 ff. Rosse's thought is "Does the baleful influence of night still dominate the world, or is the day ashamed of the deeds of darkness?"

## ACT II SCENE IV 10-20

OLD MAN

'T is unnaturall,  
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday  
last

A faulcon towring in her pride of place  
Was by a mowsing owle hawkt at and kill'd.

ROSSE

And Duncan's horses—a thing most strange  
and certaine—

Beauteous and swift, the minions of their  
race,

Turn'd wilde in nature, broke their stalls,  
flong out,

Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would  
Make warre with mankinde.

OLD MAN

'T is said they eate each other. 18

ROSSE

They did so,  
To th' amazement of mine eyes that look'd  
upon 't. 19, 20

¶10 UNNATURALL, 'unnatural,' cp. note to 1.2.51; the word means contrary to the laws of nature, cp. for a similar double meaning "Thy deeds inhumane and unnaturall Provokes this deluge most unnaturall" Rich.3 1.2.60. ¶11 EVEN LIKE, i.e. 'e'en like,' 'just like'; the word is really a compound adjective, M.E. 'evenlik.' ¶12 FAULCON: the diphthong is due to the development in EL.E. of *u* before *l* followed by a consonant and gives MN.E. 'folcon' (the first syllable rhyming with 'ball'); 'fælcon' is due to an attempt to pronounce *f-a-l-c-o-n*. TOWRING is a technical term of falconry denoting the rising of the hawk just before striking her game, cp. 2Hen.6 II.1.1 ff., especially v.10, "My lord Protector's hawkes doe towre so well"; cp. also "she towreth, *insurgit*" Holyoke s.v. 'hawk'—all the verbs Holyoke notes as applicable to falconry are introduced by 'she.' PLACE, likewise, denotes the hawk's highest pitch in soaring, cp. "She made the height of the moone the place of her flight," "he [i.e. the "tassel gentle"] never ceased in his circular motion untill he had recovered his place" Nash's Quaternio, 1633 (cited in Drake's Shakspeare and his Times, p. 127), and "A tiercel gentle . . In such a place flies

*from local hunt*

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

as he seems to say 'see me, or see me not!'" Massinger's *Guardian*, I. I (also cited by Drake). ¶ 13 The low-flying *MOWSING OWLE* is contrasted with the soaring falcon. *HAWKT AT*, 'attacked,' 'pounced upon,' N.E.D.3. ¶ 14 *HORSES*: the regular O.E. and M.E. plural 'hors' survived in e.N.E., see N.E.D. I b; the monosyllable is still used in MN.E. when we say 'a troop of fifty horse,' and it is possible that this monosyllabic form was here intended by Shakspeare, though the extra syllable before the cæsural pause is not an uncommon characteristic of EL. and M.E. versification. *CERTAINE*, 'infallible as an omen,' N.E.D. 2, cp. "that will not let you Beleeve things certaine" Temp. V. 124. ¶ 15 *MINIONS*, 'darlings,' cp. I. 2. 19; the word refers to the esteem in which the animals were held. ¶ 16 *NATURE*: the word is used as in III. 4. 30 to denote the essential characteristics of an animal. ¶ 18 *EATE* is the EL. form of the past tense, still in use with shortened vowel, 'et,' side by side with another past-tense form 'ate.' As one of its common senses is to 'gnaw upon,' 'feed upon,' the absurdity of the horses consuming one another is only apparent. The portents which Shakspeare here refers

to are described in Holinshead's account of the murder of King Duff: "For the space of six moneths together after this heinous murder thus committed, there appeared no sunne by day, nor moone by night in anie part of the realme, but still was the skie covered with continuall clouds, and sometimes such outrageous winds arose, with lightnings and tempests, that the people were in great feare of present destruction. . . Monstrous sights also that were seene within the Scottish kingdome that yeere werethese: horsses in Louthian, being of singular beautie and swiftnesse, did eate their owne flesh, and would in no wise taste anie other meate. . . There was a sparhawke also strangled by an owle." ¶ 18 ff. The verses are divided as in FO. I. For "mánkinde" see note to II. I. 49.

ACT II SCENE IV 20-27

ENTER MACDUFFE

Heere comes the good Macduffe.

How goes the world, sir, now?

MACDUFFE

Why, see you not?

ROSSE

Is 't known who did this more then bloody deed?

MACDUFFE

Those that Macbeth hath slaine.

ROSSE

Alas, the day!

What good could they pretend?

MACDUFFE

They were subborned:

Malcolme and Donalbaine, the king's two sonnes,

Are stolne away and fled, which puts upon them

Suspition of the deed.

Tam. of Shr. IV. 1. 35 (cited by Delius); in Phr. Gen. it is translated by *quid novi*. ¶ 24 *GOOD*, 'advantage.' *PRETEND* is used in its common EL. sense of 'aim at,' cp. II. 3. 137. *SUBBORNED* is now usually restricted to false swearing, 'subornation of perjury,' but in EL. E. it was applied to the instigation of any form of crime, cp. "Dighton and Forrest, whom I did suborne to do this peece of ruthfull butchery, . . Melted with tendernessee" Rich. 3 IV. 3. 4.

¶ 21 *HOW GOES THE WORLD* is an EL. conventional expression meaning 'What's the news?' as in

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶ 27 Modern editors alter the comma of FO. I after STILL to a colon; but 'GAINST NATURE STILL, i.e. 'always violating natural instincts,' seems to be a part of the apostrophe carried out by "raven up thine owne lives meanes."

¶ 28 THRIFTLESSE in EL. E. means 'greedy' as well as 'improvident.' Rosse says that the sons could not wait for the course of nature to make them kings, and now their guilty flight has deprived them of ever attaining to the sovereignty. RAVEN UP, 'devour': "[fast days] are of a Flemish breed, I am sure on't, for they ravin up more butter than all the dayes of the week besides" Every Man in his Humour III. 4. ¶ 29 MEANES is often singular in EL. E., and is applied to persons in a wide range of connotation, including 'medium,' 'agent,' 'instrument,' etc., cp. "And make the Douglas sonne your onely meane For powres in Scotland" I Hen. 4 I. 3. 261. ¶ 31 SCONE was the ancient seat of the Scottish kings, and thither they rode "for to be set in kingis stole, and to be king." The seat of the "kingis stole" was the stone of Scone, which was carried to England by Edward I in 1296. ¶ 33 COLMEKILL is Iona: Shakspeare in his mention of Scone and Colmekill as being respectively the place of 'investiture' and the burial-place of Duncan's 'predecessors' follows Holinshed; but Holinshed does not mention the fact that

it was at Iona that the records of the ancient kings were kept. Shakspeare seems to have been familiar with the fact, however, and also with the 'sacred' estimation in which the place was held from its connection with St. Columba. ¶ 36 FIFE was the seat of Macduff. ¶ 37 There seems to be a play intended on the word WELL as in IV. 3. 177, where Rosse informs Macduff that Macbeth has murdered his wife and children; but modern

ACT II

SCENE IV

27-41

ROSSE

'Gainst nature still,  
Thriftlesse ambition, that will raven up  
Thine owne lives meanes! Then 't is most  
like

The soveraignty will fall upon Macbeth.

MACDUFFE

He is already nam'd, and gone to Scone  
To be invested.

ROSSE

Where is Duncan's body?

MACDUFFE

Carried to Colmekill,  
The sacred store-house of his predecessors  
And guardian of their bones.

ROSSE

Will you to Scone?

MACDUFFE

No, cosin, I'le to Fife.

ROSSE

Well, I will thither.

MACDUFFE

Well may you see things wel done there:  
adieu!

Least our old robes fit easier then our new!

ROSSE

Farewell, father.

OLD MAN

God's benyson go with you, and with those  
That would make good of bad and friends  
of foes.

EXEUNT OMNES



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

editors insert a comma after the first WELL. Rosse later joins Macduff's party, but for the present remains with Macbeth; doubtless, therefore, the old man's words in v.41 are intended as an explanation of the part he is to take in the action immediately subsequent. Macduff's ADIEU, etc., seems to be tantamount to 'Farewell! I fear lest we begin to talk treason, for I cannot shift my allegiance so easily as you do.' The FO. spelling LEAST is that of the word before its long open e was shortened to its MN.E. form.

As Act I had for its theme the purpose or "thought" of Duncan's murder, so Act II has for its subject the achievement of the purpose. In the first act it was the subjective interests of this thought that we had before us: its incipency as a fatal decree of the powers of darkness, its effect upon Macbeth and upon Lady Macbeth, the boding shadow it casts upon Banquo. In this act the objective aspects of the murder are presented—the great fact and its immediate consequence—Scene I representing the action immediately preparatory, Scene II the act itself, Scene III Malcolm and Donalbaine fixing the guilt on themselves by their flight, Scene IV the consequent accession of Macbeth (represented in narrative). These first two acts, therefore, present the involution of the tragedy whose evolution lies in the vengeance of heaven for a foul crime instigated by the powers of evil and perpetrated by Macbeth and Lady Macbeth under the control of demoniacal agents. As has already been pointed out, the division between the two parts of the play is marked by a short scene which takes the place of a chorus.

Historically considered, Acts III, IV, and V cover a period of seventeen years, the duration of Macbeth's reign, at least ten years of which were, according to Holinshed, marked by a vigorous and righteous administration of the government, the king "governing the realme for the space of ten yeares in equall justis." After this period he begins to dread the accession of Banquo's line and murders him. The interval, therefore, between the two acts is at least ten years. But Shakspeare, with his great power of lending dramatic unity to a long series of connected events only a few of which he seizes on to represent his subject, gives this time interval a certain vagueness, so that Act III is really continuous with Act II, sometimes reflecting the long historical interval, sometimes the short psychological interval. In this way he keeps ever before us the central figure, Macbeth, and the central theme, his insanity.

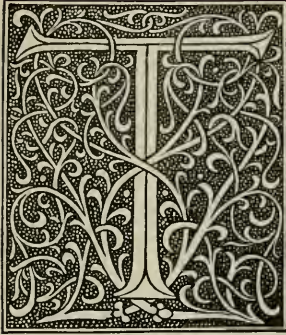
# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

## THE THIRD ACT

SCENE I: FORRES: THE PALACE  
ENTER BANQUO

I-13

BANQUO



THOU hast it now, king, Cawdor, Glamis, all,  
As the weyard women promis'd; and I feare  
Thou playd'st most fowly for 't: yet it was saide  
It should not stand in thy posterity,  
But that my selfe should be the roote and father  
Of many kings. If there come truth from them,  
As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine,  
Why, by the verities on thee made good,  
May they not be my oracles as well,  
And set me up in hope? But hush, no more!

SENIT SOUNDED

ENTER MACBETH AS KING LADY MACBETH LENOX  
ROSSE LORDS LADIES AND ATTENDANTS

MACBETH

Heere's our chiefe guest.

LADY MACBETH

If he had beene forgotten,  
It had bene as a gap in our great feast,  
And all-thing unbecomming.

¶2 Either THE before WEY-  
ARD is intended to be read as  
'th' or WEYARD is to be  
scanned as a monosyllable;  
the former seems more likely,  
as 'weird' can hardly have  
less stress than WOMEN.

¶4 IT, i.e. the sovereignty.  
STAND, 'abide,' 'remain.'  
POSTERITY, 'line,' 'issue';  
the word is used in EL. E. of  
one's immediatedescendants,  
cp. "Hee'ld make an end of  
thy posterity" Cor. IV. 2. 26.

¶5 The reflexive pronouns like MY SELFE are often used as subjects in M. E. and e. N. E.  
without the strengthening pronouns, cp. 1. 3. 96. ROOTE, 'progenitor,' a figurative use of  
the word not uncommon in EL. E., cp. "In several tables they [i.e. the Scripture genealo-  
gies] are here exhibited even from their first root" Genealogies appended to the 1613 ver-  
sion of the Bible, p. 2; cp., too, Rom. XV. 12, "the root of David," and Rev. XXII. 16. ¶7  
The modern punctuation, through which AS . . SHINE is cut off by dashes instead of  
commas as in FO. I, is misleading. AS is used in its EL. sense of 'in proportion as.'  
SPEECHES, 'statements,' here equivalent to 'predictions,' cp. "Have you consider'd of my  
speeches?" III. 1. 76; the word was used thus in EL. E. without the connotation of formal  
and premeditated utterance which it now has. SHINE, 'reflect glory and honour,' cp.  
1. 4. 41. ¶8 VERITIES, cp. "which you shal finde By every sillable a faithful veritie"  
Meas. IV. 3. 130. ¶10 SENIT SOUNDED: cp. "Other soundings there are . . a senet  
for state" 'The Souldier's Accidence' pp. 60-62, cited in N. Shak. Soc. Proceedings,  
'80-'85, Appendix, p. 86. Another stage direction of the same sort is found at the end

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

of Hen.5. It seems to have been a peculiar set of notes on the cornet associated with the movements of royal persons, cp. the interesting note on the word in Nares's Glossary. For other forms of it see Cent.Dict. s.v. The LADIES after LORDS is a modern addition to the stage direction. ¶ 13 ALL-THING, 'quite,' 'altogether,' N. E. D. 'all' 2 b; the accusative of 'thing' and 'way' with a qualifying adjective did duty as adverbs in M. E. and e. N. E., cp. "nothing afeard" 1.3.96, "something from" III.1.132; cp. also "each way guilty" Sidney's Arcadia, p. 304, "something too great" *ibid.*, p. 42 b, "any way importune [i.e. importunate]," *ibid.*, p. 4 b.

ACT III SCENE I 14-28

MACBETH

To night we hold a solemne supper, sir,  
And I'll request your presence.

BANQUO

Let your highnesse  
Command upon me, to the which my duties  
Are with a most indissoluble tye  
For ever knit.

MACBETH

Ride you this afternoone?

BANQUO

I, my good lord.<sup>20</sup>

MACBETH

We should have else desir'd your good  
advice,  
Which still hath been both grave and pros-  
perous,  
In this dayes councell; but wee'll take to  
morrow.  
Is't farre you ride?

BANQUO

As farre, my lord, as will fill up the time  
'Twixt this and supper: goe not my horse  
the better,  
I must become a borrower of the night  
For a darke houre or twaine.

N. E. D. I. PROSPEROUS, 'turning out well,' as in "And may our oathes well kept and prosperous be" Hen.5 V.2.402; possibly, however, Macbeth wishes Banquo to understand the word in its now obsolete sense of 'favourable,' cp. "To my unfolding lend your prosperous eare" Oth.1.3.245. ¶ 23 TAKE was widely used in EL. expressions of time, cp. "Take thy faire houre" Ham.1.2.62; here Macbeth seems to mean that he will postpone the meeting so that Banquo may be present at it. The words thus spoken in the presence

¶ 14 SOLEMNE has here its common EL. sense of 'formal,' 'ceremonial,' cp. "at thy solemne feast" Titus V.2.115.

¶ 16 UPON goes with ME rather than with COMMAND, and is used in its EL. E. sense of 'concerning,' 'with reference to,' cp. "I have no power upon you" Ant.&Cl. 1.3.23, and "upon for concerning; de" Phr. Gen. WHICH in e. N. E. refers to persons as well as to things, cp. "Our Father which art in heaven" in our EL. version of the Bible; as in M. E., it often takes the definite article, cp. "some soldier . . . the which for feare had sneaked from campe" Greene's Alphonso, v. 256. Banquo's words echo the notion in Macbeth's speech to Duncan in 1.4.23.

¶ 19 RIDE YOU, etc., illustrates a not uncommon word order for the EL. interrogative sentence. The word RIDE in M. E. and e. N. E. is a general term for travelling, and its employment here does not imply that Banquo is taking a ride for pleasure. ¶ 22 STILL, 'always.' GRAVE, 'carefully considered,' 'authoritative,'



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

of the court, like the order given to the servant in II. I. 31, were perhaps intended to forestall the suspicion that might fall upon Macbeth when Banquo's murder became known.

¶ 26 THE BETTER: the correlative clause is to be supplied, 'the better for having so much work to do'; cp. "they will be sure if he ride not the stronger to be fingering his purse" Harrison's England, ed. Furnivall, p. 284: the phrase is thus tantamount to 'better than usual.' ¶ 28 TWAIN

was originally the masculine form of the numeral whose neuter was 'two.' The gender distinction was lost in M. E., and the two words were used more or less interchangeably in e. N. E., 'twain' being restricted to substantive usage, and, probably from its likeness to 'twin,' being thought to stand for *bini* rather than for *duo*. By the time of Kersey, 1708, it was considered archaic, as it is in M. N. E.

¶ 28 FAILE, 'miss,' 'be absent from,' N. E. D. 9, 10. ¶ 29 Banquo's brief answer with stress falling on WILL is peculiarly ominous. ¶ 30 BLOODY, 'murderous,' 'blood-guilty,' cp. N. E. D. 6, a sense of the word now somewhat unusual. BESTOW'D, 'lodged,' as in III. 6. 24. ¶ 32 PARRICIDE applied to 'the murder of a father' is not so common now as is the word in the sense of 'the murderer of one's father.'

¶ 33 INVENTION: the notion is now more concrete and would be plural in M. N. E.

¶ 34 THEREWITHALL, 'besides that,' "withall" being equivalent to 'with.' Macbeth treats the matter as personal. CAUSE, 'business,' cp. N. E. D. 10, especially the citation "The cause craves hast" Lucr. 1295, which also illustrates CRAVING in the sense of 'demanding'—here 'requiring our attention.'

Macbeth treats Banquo as his trusted lieutenant.

¶ 36 GOES FLEANCE WITH YOU? is artfully added as an apparent afterthought. But Macbeth's plot aims at Fleance as well as at his father. ¶ 37 TIME, 'appointment.' DOES CALL UPON 'S, 'claims us,' cp. "A verie serrious businesse

## ACT III

## SCENE I

28-44

MACBETH

Faile not our feast.

BANQUO

My lord, I will not.

MACBETH

We heare our bloody cozens are bestow'd  
In England and in Ireland, not confessing  
Their cruell parricide, filling their hearers  
With strange invention: but of that to mor-  
row,

When therewithall, we shall have cause of  
state

Craving us joyntly. Hye you to horse: adieu,  
Till you returne at night. Goes Fleance with  
you?

BANQUO

I, my good lord: our time does call upon 's.

MACBETH

I wish your horses swift and sure of foot,  
And so I doe commend you to their backs.  
Farwell.

EXIT BANQUO

Let every man be master of his time  
Till seven at night; to make societie  
The sweeter welcome, we will keepe our  
selfe

Till supper time alone: while then, God be  
with you!

EXEUNT LORDS

¶ 36 GOES FLEANCE WITH YOU? is artfully added as an apparent afterthought. But Macbeth's plot aims at Fleance as well as at his father. ¶ 37 TIME, 'appointment.' DOES CALL UPON 'S, 'claims us,' cp. "A verie serrious businesse

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

call's on him" All's W. II. 4. 41. ¶ 39 COMMEND, 'commit,' as in I. 7. 11, smilingly said in imitation of the farewell formula. ¶ 40 Words like FARWELL, short phrases like "no, no," and compellations like "My lords," "Sir knight," etc., are often not reckoned as part of the verse in EL. dramatic poetry, see e.g. Peele's *Sir Clyomon and Sir Clamydes* (ed. Bullen), *passim*. ¶ 42 SOCIETIE is often used in EL. E. in the sense of social intercourse, cp. "there is nothing to which nature hath more addressed us than to society" Florio's *Montaigne*, I. 27. ¶ 43 WELCOME is used in its adjective sense. The Folio verse division is The . . welcome, We . . alone, While . . you. ¶ 44 WHILE has here its M. E. and e. N. E. sense of 'until,' cp. Tw. N. IV. 3. 29, and "While signifying 'until' or 'so long till' is made by *donec, dum* and *tantis per dum*: as I will not leave while I have done it, *haud desinam donec perfecero hoc*, etc." Phr. Gen. GOD BE WITH YOU is merely the fuller form of 'good-bye' and is probably trisyllabic here, 'God b'wy ye.'

## ACT III SCENE I 45-48

Sirrha,  
A word with you: attend those men our  
pleasure?

SERVANT

They are, my lord, without the pallace gate.

MACBETH

Bring them before us.

EXIT SERVANT

see note to v. 40. EL. printers frequently make the extra measure phrases part of the verse which follows, as the printer of FO. I has done in this case, throwing OUR PLEASURE into a separate line. The form SIRRHA is common in EL. E. Minsheu s.v. says that the word is one of contempt: though usually in Shakspeare implying the social inferiority of the person so addressed, it is not always thus used, cp. IV. 2. 30. ¶ 47 WITHOUT, 'outside of,' a sense the word often bears in M. E. and e. N. E.

## ACT III SCENE I 48-57

To be thus is nothing

But to be safely thus: our feares in Banquo  
Sticke deepe; and in his royaltie of nature  
Reignes that which would be fear'd: 't is  
much he dares,

And to that dauntlesse temper of his minde,  
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour  
To act in safetie. There is none but he  
Whose being I doe feare: and under him  
My genius is rebuk'd, as it is said  
Mark Anthonies was by Cæsar.

'unless,' 'without that.'" The idiom occurs also in Cooper's *Thesaurus s.v. fero*: "*non feret quin vapulet*, he shall not scape but be [i.e. without being] beaten." "I have much to do But to go hang my head all at one side" in Oth. IV. 3. 31 illustrates the use of the conjunction to connect two infinitives as here, but the passage has been variously miscon-

¶ 45 SIRRHA: the word is not part of v. 45, though so printed in the Cambridge text:

¶ 48, 49 TO BE THUS IS NOTHING BUT TO BE SAFELY THUS, 'To be what I am is nothing at all if I cannot be what I am in security and without fear.' This usage of BUT is paralleled in Merry W. II. 2. 321 ff.: "what they thinke in their hearts they may effect, they will breake their hearts but they will effect." The idiom is not uncommon in EL. E., cp. the statement in Phr. Gen. to the effect that 'but' was "anciently used in this sense [i.e. of 'if not,' 'did not,' 'were it not that'] for

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

strued by modern editors. The same idiom is found in Temp. II. I. 240 ff.: "No hope that way is Another way [*i.e.* looked at in another light] so high a hope [*i.e.* for the sovereignty] that even Ambition cannot pierce a winke beyond But doubt [*i.e.* without doubting] discovery [*i.e.* what is brought to light, N. E. D. 5] there," where again modern editors miss the sense in attempting to construe the passage into modern idiom. It almost always happens, as it does here, that whenever it has been assumed that a passage of Shakspeare's text is corrupt, a reference to other instances where the same idiom occurs will show that they too will have been independently assumed to be corrupt. The Cambridge Text, overlooking this usage of 'but,' adopts Theobald's punctuation, changing the comma after NOTHING to a semicolon, and construing BUT TO BE SAFELY THUS as a kind of aposiopesis. This alteration reduces Macbeth's words to sheer nonsense. The whole passage is continuous, and 'to be safely thus is everything,' or 'oh to be safely thus,' or 'I must be safely thus,' or 'to reign in safety is the thing to be desired,' or 'I will be safely thus,' no matter how the words are stressed, are ideas which could not in any period of English syntax be inferred from "But to be safely thus." "Safe" and its corresponding adverb SAFELY often in EL. E. connote the notion of 'secure,' 'securely,' cp. I. 4. 27 and "But in our orbs will live so round and safe" Per. I. 2. 122; this seems to be the meaning here. It is the insecurity of his "fruitlesse crowne" and his "barren scepter," menaced by the prediction of the witches regarding Banquo and Fleance, rather than his personal danger, that puts "rancours in the vessell" of Macbeth's peace. ¶ 49 Not FEARES in Banquo, but 'stick deep in Banquo,' 'have taken root in Banquo,' cp. "Opinion that so stickes on Martius" Cor. I. I. 275. ¶ 50 ROYALTIE OF NATURE, *i.e.* his fitness for kingship, not his innate nobility of character; Shakspeare does not use the word in this latter modern sense, but attaches to it a more literal significance. It is 'the invisible instinct framing him to royalty unlearned' which will draw the court to his support once he makes his claim that Macbeth is afraid of; Shakspeare's unerring instinct in choosing words expresses this 'dominance' by the word REIGNES. ¶ 51 WOULD BE, 'is to be,' 'must be,' a sense of the auxiliary not altogether lost in MN. E. ¶ 52 TO, 'in addition to.' DAUNTLESSE MINDE refers to Banquo's courage, not to his intellect; "mind" in EL. E. was not so restricted to intellection as in MN. E.; cp. "but let thy dauntlesse minde still ride in triumph" 3 Hen. 6 III. 3. 17. ¶ 54 ACT IN SAFETIE, 'mature his plans in security.' Macbeth is not afraid of Malcolm, Donalbaine, and Macduff, but of the quiet, far-seeing Banquo. The audience knows, however, that it is the vagueness of Banquo's suspicions and his unwillingness to lend himself to the powers of evil, not his deep-laid plans, that have prevented him from pushing his claim. SAFETIE in EL. E. is often a trisyllable saf-e-ty: Shakspeare so uses the word in Ham. I. 3. 21; to read it so here and contract THERE IS to 'there's' gives more prominent stress to NONE. ¶ 55 UNDER HIM reveals most clearly his sense of inferiority to Banquo. ¶ 56 The GENIUS or "daimon" was a Platonic conception of EL. psychology which conceived of a personal spirit attending the career of the individual; Burton, 'Anat. of Mel.' I. ii. 1. 2, says of them: 'as Anthony Rusca contends, every man hath a good and a bad angel attending on him in particular all his life long, which Iamblichus calls *dæmonem* . . . That base fellows are often advanced, undeserving Gnathoes and vicious parasites, whereas virtuous and worthy men are neglected and unrewarded, they refer to these domineering spirits or subordinate Genii; . . . for as Libanius supposeth in our ordinary conflicts and contentions *Genius genio cedit et obtemperat*, one genius yields and is overcome by another.' Burton calls these notions '*ineptiæ et fabulosæ nugæ*,' but Shakspeare reflects the belief here and in Ant. & Cl. II. 3. 18: "Therefore, oh Anthony, stay not by his side: Thy Dæmon, that thy spirit which keepes thee, is Noble, couragious, high unmatchable, Where Cæsar's is not. But neere him thy angell Becomes a feare as being o're-pow'r'd." As Cl. Pr. points out, Shakspeare, in writing the latter passage, follows North's Plutarch, ed. 1579, p. 983: "'For thy demon,' said he [*i.e.* the soothsayer who warned Antony of Cæsar's predominance], 'that is to say the good angell and spirit that keepeth thee, is afraid of his: and being coragious and high when he is alone



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

becometh fearefull and temerous when he cometh neere unto the other.'" The date of Ant.&Cl. (1606-7?) is near that of Macbeth. REBUK'D, 'checked,' 'restrained,' cp. "wee could have rebuk'd him at Harflewe" Hen.5 III. 6. 128. ¶ 57 CÆSAR: not 'by Cæsar's genius,' but by Cæsar himself, i.e. in his presence. The verse has an extra impulse before the cæsura.

ACT III SCENE I 57-72

He chid the sisters

When first they put the name of king upon me,

And bad them speake to him; then, prophet-like,

They hayl'd him father to a line of kings:

Upon my head they plac'd a fruitlesse crowne

And put a barren scepter in my gripe,

Thence to be wrencht with an unlineall hand,

No sonne of mine succeeding. If't be so,

For Banquo's issue have I fil'd my minde,

For them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd;

Put rancours in the vessell of my peace

Onely for them, and mine eternall jewell

Given to the common enemie of man,

To make them kings, the seedes of Banquo kings!

Rather then so, come fate into the lyst

And champion me to th' utterance! Who's there?

have had, for that Lady Macbeth had borne children we get from I.7.54: her husband's admiration of her power in I.7.72 takes the form, "Bring forth men-children onely," and the despair that overtakes him when in V.5.17 he hears that the queen is dead may have a deeper root than in the mere loss of a companion in his ambition, and his "She should have dy'de heereafter" be more than the mere platitude it is usually understood to be. ¶ 65 For BANQUO'S ISSUE see note to IV.1.121. FIL'D MY MINDE, 'defiled my soul'; FILE in M.E. and e.N.E. means 'to defile,' N.E.D. 3; it is an O.E. weak verb form based upon the adjective which has become 'foul' in M.N.E.: and MINDE in EL.E. is frequently used where M.N.E. employs 'soul' to denote the moral nature of man, cp. "the guiltinesse of my minde" Merry W. V.5.130. In the interval between Act II and Act III Macbeth has come to realize the price he has paid for success in allowing foul and unclean spirits to reside in his "minde." ¶ 67 RANCOURS still retained enough of its original connotation in EL.E. to make Shakspeare's figure of a tainted wine-vessel an apposite one, cp. Phillips's New World of Words, "rancidity or rancor, mouldiness, rottenness, mustiness," and Coles, 1713, "rancor, rottenness." VESSELL is similarly used in "If I would broach the vessels of my love" Timon II.2.186, and has nothing to do with

¶ 58 PUT . . UPON ME, 'addressed me with,' cp. "he . . put strange speech upon me" Tw.N. v.1.70. ¶ 63 WITH, 'by,' cp. note to I.3.93. UNLINEALL, not in the line of Macbeth and Duncan. The word is a nonce-usage in Shakspeare. Slatyer in a note to Canto XIV of his Jacobus (p.287) says that "The house of Loquahabar to which Banquo belonged was an ancient house and allyed to the kings." It suits Shakspeare's dramatic purpose to conceive of the sceptre being WRENCHT from the usurper Macbeth's hands, and to such a conception NO SONNE OF MINE SUCCEEDING is a dramatic necessity. One tradition at least gives Macbeth an heir; Holinshed is silent on the subject. But Macbeth's strong hope for a son is sufficient ground for his bitterness against Banquo and Fleance. And such a hope he must

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

Rom. IX. 22, 23, as Cl. Pr. supposes. ¶ 68 MINE ETERNALL JEWELL, cp. "the jewell of life By some damn'd hand was rob'd and tane away" John V. 1. 40. ETERNALL in EL. E. means 'immortal,' cp. "They belevee their soules to be eternall" Florio's Montaigne, I. xxx. ¶ 69 THE COMMON ENEMIE OF MAN, i.e. Satan, cp. "What, man! defie the divell? consider, he's an enemy to mankind" Tw.N. III. 4. 107. This and v. 65 go deeper than a mere 'expression of remorse of conscience,' as they are generally understood. They rather show Macbeth's guilty consciousness that his belief in the instruments of darkness is practically a tacit bargain with the powers of evil. ¶ 70 SEEDES, 'descendants,' cp. "Saw his heroicall seed and smil'd to see him" Hen. 5 II. 4. 59, 'My flesh divided in your precious shapes Shall still retain my spirit though I die And live in all your [quarto of 1606, 'our'] seeds immortally' Marlowe's Tamburlaine, 2d part, v. 3 (cited by Dyce), and 'Thunders on your head And after you crush your surviving seeds' Chapman and Shirley's Chabot, II. 3 (cited by Walker). In spite of these passages, many modern editors assume that 'seed' cannot have a plural, and change Shakspeare's "seedes" of FOS. 1, 2, 3, and 4 to 'seed.' Dyce says that the Marlowe passage is 'corrupt' in both editions, and Walker says that Shirley's whole play is 'corrupt.' But such arbitrary assumptions of grammatical usage in EL. E. and such wholesale invokings of the *deus ex machina* of corruptness to explain EL. usages which do not conform to modern notions are unreasonable and unscholarly. The citation from Hen. 5 clearly shows that "seed" in EL. E. was used as a singular and concrete noun as well as a collective term for descendants: we are not warranted therefore in altering Shakspeare's text as do the Cambridge editors on mere arbitrary grounds, despite the fact that "sonnes" is apparently printed for "son" in III. 6. 24. ¶ 71 RATHER THEN SO, i.e. rather than have Banquo's descendants become kings; cp. note to II. 1. 47. COME FATE is usually construed as a vocative idiom and "fate" cut off by commas; but there is no good ground for departing from the FO. punctuation, that of the text, which makes the idiom subjunctive, i.e. let fate come, etc. LYST as a term for the enclosure in which formal combats were held is usually plural, 'lists,' in EL. E. as in MN. E. Minsheu, however, gives "a list to fight in," and there is as little ground for making the word into 'lists' as there is for making "seedes" into 'seed.' ¶ 72 CHAMPION ME TO TH' UTTERANCE: the phraseology of this passage and the use of "me" after "champion" make it scarcely possible that the modern construction 'fight against me to the uttermost' was the one which an EL. audience would put upon Shakspeare's words. CHAMPION used as a verb is not elsewhere found in EL. E., see N. E. D.; but there can be little doubt that Macbeth means that FATE is to be his champion to maintain his royal title against all comers, and not Banquo's champion. Cowel in his law dictionary gives an interesting definition of the tenure of the royal championship by the house of Dimnock, cited in N. E. D. The Dimnock title and tenure to the royal championship are not yet extinct, though the service had degenerated to the mere bearing of the royal standard of England at the coronation of King Edward VII. Halle's description of the championship of Henry VIII, 'Chronicle,' 1550, Hen. 8, folio 4, contains the phrase Shakspeare used: "Then he [i.e. Sir William Dimnocke] commaunded his awne [i.e. owne] herauld . . . to saie: if there be any persone, of what estate or degree soever he be, that will saie or prove [i.e. maintain] that Kyng Henry the Eight is not the rightful inheritor and kyng of this realme I sir William Dimnocke, here his champion, offre my glove to fight in his querell [i.e. cause] with any persone to th' utterance." TO TH' UTTERANCE and 'to the outrance' are English versions of the O.FR. '*combattre jusqu'a outrance de mort*,' which denoted a combat to the death, a fight without quarter, that must continue until one or the other of the combatants was killed. The English phrase 'to the uttermost' is probably responsible for the form 'utterance' instead of 'outrance.' To "keepe at utterance," i.e. to hold to the last extremity, occurs in Cym. III. 1. 73. FATE in EL. E. is used of death, destruction, ruin, cp. note to II. 3. 127: Fleance "must embrace the fate of that darke houre" in v. 137, Macbeth will "take a bond of [i.e. from] fate" by killing Macduff in IV. 1. 84. Here death and ruin are to be Macbeth's champions and maintain his claim to the crown 'e'en till distruction

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

sicken.' The words are not a challenge to destiny: Macbeth is not ready for that until the end of the play, cp. V.8. 30 ff.; when he can challenge destiny he redeems himself, and his long tragedy is over. This soliloquy of Macbeth, like the other soliloquy in I.3. 130 ff., from "To be thus is nothing, but to be safely thus" to these, its closing words, becomes hopelessly confused when we try to wrest its phraseology into MN.E., and clearly illustrates the folly of ignoring the fact that Shakspeare's English is quite different from modern idiom.

## ACT III SCENE I 73-84

ENTER SERVANT AND TWO MURTHERRERS  
Now goe to the doore, and stay there till we call.

EXIT SERVANT  
Was it not yesterday we spoke together?

MURTHERRERS  
It was, so please your highnesse.

MACBETH  
Well then, now  
Have you consider'd of my speeches? Know  
That it was he in the times past which held  
you  
So under fortune, which you thought had been  
Our innocent selfe: this I made good to you  
In our last conference, past in probation  
with you  
How you were borne in hand, how crost, the  
instruments,  
Who wrought with them, and all things else  
that might  
To halfe a soule and to a notion craz'd  
Say 'Thus did Banquo.'

The ENTER SERVANT would, of course, be 're-enter' in MN. stage directions, cp. note to II.3.95. ¶74 SPOKE is again used in its EL. sense of 'conferred.' ¶75 WELL THEN seems to be an answer to the first murderer's statement. The FO. begins a new verse with "now": but the N in "Now" may be a misprint for H, its neighbouring letter in the printers' case. "Well then, how" would avoid the awkward collocation of notions presented by "then now." FO.3 and FO.4 read "You have" instead of "Have you." From here to v.82 the FO. verse division is Know . . past, Which . . fortune, Which . . selfe, This . . conference, Past . . you, How . . crost, The instruments . . them, And . . might. ¶76 CONSIDER'D OF, 'thought carefully over,' N.E.D. II. SPEECHES, 'statements,' or possibly 'offers'; cp. note on III.1.7 and III.6.1. Shakspeare by thus

picturing the continuation of negotiations already begun avoids the introduction of a new theme of interest. ¶77 The rhythm of IN THE TIMES PAST is "x" with reversal occurring after the cæsura. The idiom is now 'in the past' with 'times,' i.e. occasions, omitted. ¶78 UNDER FORTUNE, 'exposed to danger,' with FORTUNE in its somewhat rare sense of 'misfortunes,' 'perils,' cp. "the batailles, sieges, fortune That I have past" Oth. I.3. 130, also III.1. 112 of this play and N.E.D. 2 b. That this is the meaning here seems clear from "He is now under the hazards of fortune, *fortunæ jam ictibus est expositus*" Phr. Gen. s.v. 'fortune.' ¶79 INNOCENT, 'inn'cent,' see note to I.5.66; so 'conf'rence' in the next verse. ¶80 PAST IN PROBATION, 'spent with you in proving how, etc.': PAST is the adjectively used past participle and goes with CONFERENCE; FO. I has a comma after "conference," but, as has already been pointed out, this is normal EL. punctuation, see note to I.2.56. Many modern editors alter the sense by printing a



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

semicolon after "conference," making "past" the past tense. But no such idiom as 'to pass in probation' in the sense of 'going over the evidence' has yet been found in EL.E. PROBATION, 'proving,' cp. "probation . . proving" Cotgrave. ¶81 BORNE IN HAND is a common M.E. and e.N.E. phrase meaning 'charged' and also 'deceived.' In the N.E.D. s.v. 'bear' 3 c the former sense is said to be obsolete *circa* 1540; but a kindred meaning to 'charge,' viz. 'falsely maintain,' was still in use in 1681; cp. "Do not bear me in hand, that; *Noli quæso præ te ferre vos*—" (the rest of its unfinished citation is "*plane expertes esse doctrinæ*") Phr. Gen. s.v. 'hand.' 'Bear in hand,' therefore, in the sense of 'charge' may well have been in use in Shakspeare's time even though not noticed by the readers for the Oxford Dictionary. The notion of preferring false charges seems to be in Macbeth's mind. CROST, 'thwarted,' 'opposed,' N.E.D. 14. INSTRUMENTS, 'means,' N.E.D. 1. The verse seems to be one of six waves; but "instrument" appears to be stressed on its second syllable in Rich.2 V.5.107 and possibly also in Cym. III.4.75: so the reading 'th' instrûment' may have been here intended. Abbott supposes that the word was syncopated to 'instr'ment,' but such a syncopation bringing -strm- together would be phonetically difficult. ¶83 SOULE in EL.E. was somewhat more extensively used to denote an individual than in MN.E., cp. "that unlettered, small knowing soule" L.L.L. I.1.253. NOTION, 'understanding'; Kersey glosses the word by "knowledge," Coles, 1713, by "knowledge or understanding, also a conceit or point delivered." Cent. Dict. cites Lear I.4.248, "his notion weakens," and Milton, 'Paradise Lost' VII.179, "The acts of God so told as earthly notion can receive." The verse has the extra syllable before the cæsura.

## ACT III

## SCENE I

84-94

### FIRST MURTHERER

You made it knowne to us.

### MACBETH

I did so; and went further, which is now  
Our point of second meeting. Doe you finde  
Your patience so predominant in your nature,  
That you can let this goe? Are you so gos-  
pell'd,  
To pray for this good man and for his issue,  
Whose heavie hand hath bow'd you to the  
grave  
And begger'd yours for ever?

### FIRST MURTHERER

We are men, my liege.

### MACBETH

I, in the catalogue ye goe for men;  
As hounds and greyhounds, mungrels, span-  
iels, cures,  
Showghes, water-rugs and demy-wolves, are  
clipt

¶85 The FO. verse division is I . . so, And . . now, Our . . meeting, Doe . . predomi-  
nant, In . . goe, Are . . man,  
And . . hand, Hath . . beg-  
ger'd, Yours . . ever. ¶86  
POINT OF, not 'point where  
we meet a second time,' but  
'my reason for this second  
conference'; cp. "As the  
maine point of this our after-  
meeting" Cor. II.2.43, "The  
ground and principal point  
of the cause" Alvearie s.v.  
'point,' and "a pretty point  
of security" Suckling's Let-  
ters, 1648, cited in Cent.  
Dict.; cp. also Coles, 1679,  
"point, *causa, status, caput*."  
¶88 LET . . GOE, 'let this  
go on unchecked,' N.E.D.  
'let,' v<sup>1</sup>, 22 e, or perhaps 'dis-  
miss this from your thoughts,'  
N.E.D. 22 c. ARE YOU SO  
GOSPELL'D TO, 'have you  
been so converted as to,'  
see N.E.D. s.v. 'gospelled' a.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

ACT III SCENE I 95-108

All by the name of dogges: the valued file  
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,  
The house-keeper, the hunter, every one  
According to the gift which bounteous nature  
Hath in him clos'd, whereby he does receive  
Particular addition, from the bill  
That writes them all alike: and so of men.  
Now if you have a station in the file  
Not i' th' worst ranke of manhood, say 't,  
And I will put that businesse in your bosomes  
Whose execution takes your enemy off,  
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,  
Who weare our health but sickly in his life,  
Which in his death were perfect.

Macbeth alludes to "Ye have heard that it hath bene said Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy . . . But I say unto you, Love your enemies . . . and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you" Matt. v. 43, 44. For SO . . . TO in EL.E. corresponding to MN.E. 'so...as to' see note to II. 3.56. ¶89 FOR HIS ISSUE: with his wonderful insight into character, Shakspeare makes Macbeth reflect his own purpose and motives into the minds of the soldiers. ¶91 YOURS, 'your families,' see note on I.6.26. ¶92 Macbeth taunts the soldiers as Lady Macbeth taunted him in I.7.47, affecting to misunderstand their use of the word

MEN. IN THE CATALOGUE has not here the vague general sense which is given it in MN.E. In Comenius's Janua "list (catalogue)" stands in the index with a reference to 650, "In the same place is kept the register of the citizens names"; cp. also Coles, "catalogus, roll, bill, catalogue." Macbeth says 'on the muster-roll you pass for men.' YE is the unemphatic form of the plural second personal pronoun. ¶93 Of the dogs Macbeth mentions MUNGRELS were used for sheep-herding, cp. "heards . . . whom mastiffs (bandogs) or mungrels protect from the wolf" Janua, 410; SPANIELS were bird-dogs, cp. Cotgrave, *chien d'oiseaux*: they were distinguished as 'water spaniels' and 'land spaniels'; CURREs were watch-dogs and sheep-dogs, N.E.D. 1, cp. "cur dogg, *canis gregarius*" Withall's 'Littell Dictionary for Children'; SHOWGHES is probably a variant spelling of 'shocks'; Coles's gloss, "shock (dog), *canis Islandicus*," would point to a Norse origin for the word, and the variation between 'shough' and 'shock' would indicate an early introduction of it into English; the term is usually taken to mean a rough, shaggy dog; WATER-RUGS: Coles gives "Rug (a dog's name), *Lachne*"; the Cent. Dict., and perhaps rightly, connects the word with 'rug,' a shaggy garment; DEMY-WOLVES: cp. "*licisque*, a dog engendred between a wolfe and a dog" Cotgrave, and "*licisco*, a dog engendred between a wolfe and a bitch, a mungrell curre" Florio; the prefix 'demi' was widely used in EL.E. to denote things or persons belonging half to one class and half to another, cp. quotations in N.E.D. s.v. 'demi' 11. ¶94 CLIPT, another form of 'clept,' 'called,' was not yet obsolete in EL.E. though archaic: Shakspeare uses it again in Ham. I. 4.19. ¶95 THE VALUED FILE, 'the priced list,' cp. "This is the breefe of money, plate, and jewels I am possest of; 't is exactly valewed" Ant.&Cl. v.2.138, and "Our present musters grow upon the file To five and twenty thousand men" 2Hen.4 I.3.10. ¶96 DISTINGUISHES, 'singles out,' N.E.D. 3 b. ¶97 HOUSE-KEEPER, 'watch-dog,' N.E.D. 3 b. ¶99 CLOS'D, 'enclosed,' N.E.D. 3; the verb was also used in EL.E. in the sense of setting a jewel. ¶100 ADDITION, 'mark of distinction,' see note to I.3.106. BILL, 'general catalogue,' cp. "a bil of properties" Mids. I.2.108, and the citation in note to "catalogue," v. 92 above. The word is still in use in 'bill of particulars,' 'bill of lading,' etc. ¶101 WRITES, 'enrolls,' cp. "who writes himselfe Armigero in any bill" Merry W. I. 1.9; Baret seems to intend this meaning in his gloss "to write . . . enrol men of armes, *conscribo*"

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

Alvearie' s.v. ¶ 102 STATION IN THE FILE, i.e. a place on the list; the Folio's comma after "file" has been removed, as NOT I'TH', etc., evidently goes with STATION. ¶ 103 The FO. text makes this a four-wave verse, and perhaps it was intended to be such: Nót i' th' wórst ránke of mánhóod, sáy't; various expedients have been resorted to in order to fill out the verse, perhaps the best of which is Nót in the wó-erst ránke, etc., cp. note to 1.5.40. For the verbiage of the passage, cp. "of the best ranck and station" Ham.1.3.73. ¶ 104 PUT IN YOUR BOSOMES is normal EL.E. for 'confide to you,' cp. "thy bosome shall partake The secrets of my heart" Cæs.11.1.305. ¶ 105 ENEMIE is almost as frequently a dissyllable in EL.E., 'en'my' (usually so printed), as it is a trisyllable. TAKES . . OFF, cp. 1.7.20. ¶ 107 WEARE is used in EL.E., at least by Shakspeare, to denote exhaustion of energy, and may be followed by a predicate adjective denoting the effect of this exhaustion, cp. "this exceeding posting . . Must wear your spirits low" All's W.V.1.1. IN HIS LIFE and IN HIS DEATH both illustrate a M.E. and e.N.E. idiom by which IN is used to express the occasion of an action, cp. "Dighton and Forrest . . Wept like to children in their death's sad story," i.e. at the sad story of their death, Rich.3 IV.3.4.

¶ 108 MY LIEGE is probably extraneous to the verse, cp. note to III.1.40; but the passage can be scanned by contracting I AM to 'I'm,' making a verse with an extra impulse before the cæsura. ¶ 109 VILE has in EL.E. the sense of 'wicked,' 'malicious'; Coles distinguishes between "vile (filthy)," which he glosses *sordidus*, and "vile (wicked)," which he glosses *flagitiosus*; cp. also "T is a vile thing to dye, my gracious lord, When men are unprepar'd, and looke not for it" Rich.3 III.2.64. ¶ 111 SPIGHT is one of a group of

e.N.E. forms into which an English *gh* intruded from the analogy of 'right,' 'light,' etc.; 'sprightly' is still in use. ¶ 112 WEARIE, almost equivalent to 'disgusted,' 'sick,' an EL. meaning of the word recrudescent some years ago in American slang; cp. "wherein we are not destitute for want, But wearie for the stalenesse" Per.V.1.57. DISASTERS, not 'calamities,' but 'bad luck'; the word originally denotes an unfavorable position of the heavenly bodies, cp. Ham.1.1.118. TUGG'D WITH FORTUNE, not 'dragged by fortune,' as usually understood, but 'buffeted by misfortune'; cp. Cotgrave's gloss, "*sabouler* [the word means 'to toss about'], tug, mumble, or scuffle with"; "*saboulement*, a tugging or scuffling with." In Wint.T. IV.4.507 we have "let my selfe and fortune Tug for the time to come," where the 'scuffling' notion is prominent. EL. WITH corresponding to MN.E. 'by' has already been sufficiently illustrated. ¶ 113 SET, 'stake,' cp. "Were it good to set the exact wealth of all our states All at one cast?" 1Hen.4 IV.1.45. ¶ 114 RID ON'T: as to the usage of ON for 'of,' cp. note to II.3.43. ¶ 115 WAS, 'has been,' a M.E. use of the imperfect sometimes met with in e.N.E. ENEMIE, 'en'my' again, as above.

## ACT III SCENE I 108-115

### SECOND MURTHURER

I am one, my liege,  
Whom the vile blowes and buffets of the world  
Hath so incens'd that I am recklesse what  
I doe to spight the world.

### FIRST MURTHURER

And I another,  
So wearie with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,  
That I would set my life on any chance,  
To mend it or be rid on't.

### MACBETH

Both of you  
Know Banquo was your enimie.

### MURTHURERS

True, my lord.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶ 116 IN BLOODY DISTANCE, 'with bloodthirsty enmity' (see note on "bloody cozens," v. 30 above); "distance" here means 'discord,' 'enmity,' N.E.D. I, and to the EL. mind contained no suggestion of 'the distance mortal enemies would stand from each other,' as it is usually explained. Enmity, strife, debate, is the original meaning of the word, and is found

ACT III SCENE I 116-127

MACBETH

So is he mine; and in such bloody distance  
That every minute of his being thrusts  
Against my neer'st of life: and though I could  
With bare-fac'd power sweepe him from my  
sight

And bid my will avouch it, yet I must not  
For certaine friends that are both his and  
mine;

Whose loves I may not drop, but wayle his  
fall

Who I my selfe struck downe: and thence  
it is

That I to your assistance doe make love,  
Masking the businesse from the common eye  
For sundry weightie reasons.

SECOND MURTHERRER

We shall, my lord,

Performe what you command us.

FIRST MURTHERRER

Though our lives—

in English as early as 1297; the modern notion of 'distance' is later, the first quotation in N.E.D. being dated 1440. ¶ 117, 118 THRUSTS AGAINST can mean 'makes thrusts against'; but Cotgrave glosses *renitance* by "a hard thrusting or endeavoring against," and *renitent* by "resisting, indeavoring, laboring or thrusting against"; Coles gives *repulsus* for "thrust against" and glosses *obdo* by "to thrust against." Perhaps, therefore, the notion is one of hampering or besetting rather than 'aiming at.' ¶ 118 MY NEER'ST OF LIFE, like "their first of manhood" V. 2. 11 and "thy best of rest" Meas. III. 1. 17, is the EL. partitive form of the superlative, corresponding to MN.E. 'the dearest interest of my life'; cp. "which many my neere occasions [i.e. private interests of my own] did urge mee to put off" Timon III. 6. 11. The form NEER'ST is the usual syncope superlative of M.E. and e.N.E. ¶ 119 BARE-FAC'D means 'open,' 'avowed,' in EL.E., cp. N.E.D. 2; the re-

striction of the word to its bad sense, 'impudent,' is later than Shakspeare. ¶ 120 WILL, 'pleasure,' a common EL. meaning of the word: see Sonnet CXXXV. AVOUCH, 'warrant,' 'stand sponsor for,' cp. "if the duke avouch the justice of your dealing" Meas. IV. 2. 200. ¶ 121 FOR, 'on account of,' 'because of.' ¶ 122 WHOSE is the connective relative, 'and their.' LOVES is another instance of the EL. plural of abstract nouns where two or more persons or things are concerned, cp. v. 70. I MAY NOT had in e.N.E. the sense of 'it is not possible for me to': see the numerous instances in Schmidt s.v. 'may'; this phrase was tantamount to 'I am obliged to,' with a verb expressing the contrary notion; Macbeth's words are therefore equivalent to 'whose good will I am obliged to maintain.' EL.E. permitted certain zeugmatic constructions which are no longer tolerated; by one of these a word was expressed in one sense and supplied mentally in another, cp. note to I. 5. 20-22; such a zeugma we have here: the MAY is first used as part of a negative notion, 'it is not possible for me,' etc., then it is supplied in its positive form, 'but I shall be obliged to wail,' etc. We have the same kind of zeugma in Sonnet XXXVI, "I may not ever more acknowledge thee [i.e. I am obliged to disown thee from this time forth], Nor

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

thou with public kindness honor me, Unless, etc.," i.e. and it is not possible for thee to honour me, etc. ¶ 123 WHO, of course, in MN.E. would be accusative, but such case confusions are common in EL.E.; thousands of instances might be cited from the best EL. writers. These idioms are offensive to our modern notions of grammar: modern editors sometimes alter them into corresponding MN.E. forms, sometimes leave them alone. ¶ 125 COMMON, 'public'; this sense is now confined to phrases like 'common prayer,' 'common carrier,' etc. ¶ 126 The person distinction between SHALL and 'will' is a MN.E. literary idiom, as has already been pointed out. ¶ 127 This anacoluthon is punctuated in FO.I with two short dashes.

## ACT III SCENE I 128-139

### MACBETH

¶ 128 Macbeth wants no protestations of willingness, and artfully says that he can see that they are determined men. SPIRITS is here a monosyllable, as often in EL.E. For the notion cp. 1.2.46 and 1.5.27. ¶ 130 PERFECT SPY O'TH'TIME has long been a subject of controversy: the words are usually explained as meaning 'the exact instant at which it must be done'; this reading reflects the MN.E. meanings of Shakspeare's words; it is also supported by "I'le spie some fitter time soone, or tomorrow" Jonson's Every Man in his Humour, III.3. If we adopt this reading the FOR, etc., will express the reason for Macbeth's haste: the chief objection to it is the unusual usage

Your spirits shine through you. Within this  
houre at most

I will advise you where to plant your selves,  
Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' th' time  
The moment on 't; for 't must be done to  
night,

And something from the pallace; alwayes  
thought

That I require a clearenesse: and with him,  
To leave no rubs nor botches in the worke,  
Fleas his sonne, that keepses him companie,  
Whose absence is no lesse materiall to me  
Then is his father's, must embrace the fate  
Of that darke houre. Resolve your selves  
apart:

I'le come to you anon.

of "spy" as a noun meaning 'estimate.' Another interpretation was suggested by Johnson, who took the statement as a reference to the mysterious "third murderer" in Scene III, and changed THE to A: Johnson's change is no longer necessary to his interpretation, for we now know that THE had frequently in EL.E. a demonstrative force represented in MN.E. by a light possessive adjective. Stevens inclined to Johnson's view, but unnecessarily altered the comma after YOUR SELVES to a semicolon so as to make ACQUAINT an imperative. If we adopt it ACQUAINT . . WITH will mean 'cause you to know,' cp. Temp. II.2.41; THE will correspond to MN.E. 'my'; PERFECT will have its sense of 'well informed,' cp. 1.5.2; TIME will refer to 'the opportunity to murder Banquo'; THE MOMENT ON'T will mean 'on the spot' (the comma after "time" in FO.I does not interfere with this construction because EL. printers often cut off such phrases with commas regardless of their close relation to the sentence); and the following clause, FOR, etc., will give the reason why the third murderer has not been introduced to them—there is no time for such formalities. The advantage of this latter interpretation is that it affords some explanation of the third murderer's presence in Scene III; the reason the second murderer there gives for trusting him is "he tells us just what to do." The 'third murderer' is clearly one of those hired spies Macbeth speaks of in III.4.131, and to Elizabethan ears

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

'the perfect spy' for 'my perfect spy' would not be an unfamiliar idiom. Various emendations have been proposed, but, as is usually the case, they create new difficulties without solving the old ones. ¶ 132 SOMETHING, 'somewhat,' an EL. adverb, cp. note to v. 13. FROM has here its adverbial sense, 'at a distance from,' still preserved in the phrase 'from home,' N.E.D. 5. ALWAYS THOUGHT, an EL. absolute construction meaning 'always bearing in mind'; a similar idiom occurs in "Alwayes conditioned the master bethinke himselfe where to his charge tendeth" Florio's Montaigne, I. xxv. ¶ 133 I REQUIRE, 'it is necessary for me to have': a strong emphasis falls upon I. CLEARENESSE, i.e. freedom from blame, cp. "clearness (from fault), *innocentia*" Coles; also I.7.18. For the indefinite article, see note to I.7.68, and cp. "ready, or in a readiness, *promptus*" Baret's Alvearie. As Steevens pointed out, the parenthesis "alwayes . . . clearenesse" was doubtless suggested by Holinshed's "appointing them to meet with the same Banquo and his sonne without the palace as they returned to the palace, and there to slea them, so that he would not have his house slandered, but that in time to come he might cleare himselfe if anie thing were laid to his charge upon anie suspicion that might arise" Boswell-Stone's Holinshed, p. 33. ¶ 134 RUBS were the rough places on a bowling-green which deflected the

## ACT III SCENE I 139-142

### MURDERERS

We are resolv'd, my lord.

### MACBETH

I'll call upon you straight: abide within.  
It is concluded. Banquo, thy soules flight  
If it finde heaven must finde it out to night.

### EXEUNT

course of the bowl; the notion in the figure is that of deflecting Macbeth's aim. BOTCHES is a common EL. word for 'patches,' see N. E. D. ¶ 136 ABSENCE, another of Macbeth's euphemisms. ¶ 137 FATE, 'ruin,' 'destruction,' cp. note to v. 71. RESOLVE YOURSELVES, 'come to your decision,' cp. "Resolve thee, Richard" 3Hen.6 I.1.49.

¶ 139 The two half verses make one of six rhythm waves.

¶ 140 I'LE CALL UPON YOU, 'I will demand your services,' N. E. D. 23c; cp. "speake not to him till we call upon you" Meas. V. I. 287. STRAIGHT, 'immediately,' a common E. N. E. sense of the word. The EXEUNT is probably only a rough stage direction, the murderers leaving Macbeth after his "Abide within." Though Macbeth utters only the couplet in vv. 141, 142, he probably walks back and forth upon the stage for a short interval, giving the audience the impression of a mental struggle which is brought to an end by his "It is concluded." Davenant after this action introduces a dialogue between Macduff and Lady Macduff.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SCENE II

While the dramatic purpose of Scene II is to supply an interval between the plot against Banquo and Fleance and the accomplishment of the murder, its psychological purpose, if we may so term it, is to join Lady Macbeth and her husband in a common sympathy and a common responsibility on the threshold of this new murder. This time the fixed purpose to remove the menace to their peace is Macbeth's and the details of the work are of his planning: it is Lady Macbeth who acquiesces—"But in them nature's coppie's not eterne"—with a single pregnant utterance whose oracularly grim association of ideas is later reflected in Macbeth's "great bond which keeps me pale." We get from it also a clear vision of the torture of Macbeth's mind which forms the prelude to this second "deed of dreadfull note." With a masterly treatment of detail Shakspeare exposes to view the



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

harried soul, fear, doubt, anxiety, remorse, all mingling together in a Witches' Sabbath of mad passion. The unrest is intensified by the contrasted notion of Duncan's peace—a peace which Macbeth cries for when there is no peace. We are thus prepared for the mad fits which follow, and are made to see that there is no escape from them this side the grave. The snake Macbeth and Lady Macbeth have 'scorched' is 'the worm that dieth not,' and their poor malice will always be in danger of its former tooth—unsafe to-morrows stretching out to the crack of doom. That their minds should break under such a strain is scarcely to be wondered at after a picture like this: the only wonder is that Macbeth should be able to resist his doom so long. It seems strange that in this second deed of blood he should not take Lady Macbeth with him. It cannot be because he will conceal it from her—his references to Banquo are too clumsy for that. It must be that for some reason or other he will keep her out of the action. May it not be because she is in no physical condition to endure it and that Macbeth will spare her the strain? He hints at a new fondness for her in his "dearest chuck," a fondness that he has not been in the habit of displaying. If we take this with Macbeth's strange words in "she should have dy'de heereafter" and their connection, "to morrow and to morrow and to morrow" in V.5.17, may we not see in this tenderness and in this apparent reluctance to make his wife a sharer in the details of the second murder the dim reflection of a more definite hope for the heir finally to defeat the claims of Banquo's line? It is like Shakspeare to give the imagination hints of a situation which he does not explicitly define.

## SCENE II: THE PALACE

ENTER MACBETH'S LADY AND A SERVANT

I—7

LADY MACBETH

S Banquo gone from court?

SERVANT

I, madame, but returns againe to night.

LADY MACBETH

Say to the king I would attend his leysure  
For a few words.

SERVANT

Madame, I will.

EXIT

LADY MACBETH

Nought's had, all's spent,  
Where our desire is got without content:  
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy  
Than by destruction dwell in doubtfull joy.

¶1 The usual EL. auxiliary with verbs of motion is IS, corresponding to MN. E. 'has.' COURT, 'the immediate surroundings of the king,' N. E. D. 6. The word now usually refers to a formal assembly held by the sovereign. Lady Macbeth's words strike the keynote of the scene. ¶2 I is the EL. form of 'Aye,' cp. note to II.2.17. ¶3 SAY TO THE KING, 'tell the king,' cp. I.2.6. ATTEND, 'await,' N. E. D. 13. ¶4 Lady Macbeth's words are the conclusion, couched in the form of proverbs, of a train of thought which her evident intention to speak to her husband on the subject of his despondency has led her into. Macbeth enters with the same thought in mind. ¶6 DESTROY in M. E. and e. N. E. is used of putting persons as well as things out of existence. ¶7 DOUBTFULL, apprehensive, N. E. D. 5.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶8 KEEPE ALONE: Burton, 'Anat. of Mel.' 1.3.i.2, says that solitariness is one of the symptoms of 'melancholy madness': 'they abhor all companions, at last even their nearest acquaintances and most familiar friends.' In this solitariness 'there is nothing so vain,

## ACT III SCENE II 8-12

ENTER MACBETH

How now, my lord! why doe you keepe alone,  
Of sorryest fancies your companions making,  
Using those thoughts which should indeed  
have dy'd

With them they thinke on? Things without  
all remedie

Should be without regard: what's done is  
done.

e. N. E. often means 'anxieties,' and has such a shade of meaning here; we still have this sense of the word in 'take no thought for the morrow.' ¶11 THINKE ON, 'bring to mind,' cp. "not a thought but thinks on dignitie" 2Hen.6 III.1.338. In M. E. and e. N. E. ALL is frequently used in the sense of 'any,' e.g. "at all adventure," i.e. on any chance, Golding's Translation of Calvin's Galatians, p. 187 b. It is very frequent after WITHOUT, cp. "without all helpe" Newton's Thebais, Sp. Soc., p. 108; "without all question" James's Corruption of Scripture, 1612, p. 23; "without all wayne glory" Arcadia, p. 19 b.

¶13 SCORCH'D, 'hacked,' 'lacerated'; the Cambridge Text and most modern editors print Theobald's 'scotch'd' for Shakspeare's "scorch'd." Modern editors of Beaumont and Fletcher likewise change the text of the 'Knight of the Burning Pestle' III.4, where

## ACT III SCENE II 13-15

MACBETH

We have scorch'd the snake, not kill'd it:  
Shee'le close and be her selfe, whilst our  
poore mallice

Remaines in danger of her former tooth.

I. 183 in the sense of *lacerare*, 'to tear': "and vowes . . . To scorch your face and to disfigure you," where some modern editors strangely understand 'to singe,' and Warburton and Dyce emend the text to 'scotch.' This, like so many other alleged misprints in Shakspeare, is therefore a creature of the editorial imagination. ¶14 SHEE'LE: the word 'snake' is feminine as well as neuter in EL. E. CLOSE, 'come together,' 'join,' cp. "As many lynes close in the dial's center" Hen. 5 I. 2. 210. For the whole notion, cp. "The sillie serpent found by country swaine And cut in peeces [i.e. scorched] by his furious blowes Yet if his [genitive of 'it'] head do scape away untoucht, As many write, it very strangelye goes To fetch an herbe, with which in little time Her batted corpes again she doth conjoyne" Greene's Alphonsus, 1577, 308-313. POORE MALLICE, 'ineffective influence

absurd, ridiculous, extravagant, impossible, incredible . . . which they will not really fear, feign, suspect and imagine unto themselves,' cp. "of sorryest fancies your companions making." ¶9 SORRYEST, as in II. 2. 21, here means 'most gloomy,' 'most dismal,' cp. Cent. Dict. 3. ¶10 USING, 'making yourself familiar with,' 'entertaining,' a common EL. meaning of the word, cp. "I will make all use of it [i.e. discontent], for I use it onely" Ado I. 3. 41. THOUGHTS in M. E. and

"scorcht and scored in this inhuman wise" occurs, altering the EL. "scorcht" to 'scotcht.' The word "scorch" is a derivative verb from "score" and means 'to hack.' In Rhodes's Book of Nurture, 1577, a boy is told "With knyfe scortche not the boorde [i.e. table]" Babees Book, E. E. T. S., p. 80. Shakspeare uses the word also in Err. V.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

for evil,' one of those marvellously tense expressions of Shakspeare's so hard to render into MN.E. terms. The word "mallice" in EL.E. connotes 'influence for evil' as well as 'desire to do evil,' cp. v. 25. ¶ 15 FORMER, 'formerly possessed,' cp. "I'le worke My selfe a former fortune" Cor. v.3.201.

## ACT III SCENE II 16-26

¶ 16 FRAME OF THINGS, 'the established order of things,' N.E.D. 4; but possibly Macbeth means 'the earth': Hamlet speaks of "this goodly frame the earth" II. 2.309. In Shakspeare's time the word was common in this sense, see N.E.D. 8. DIS-JOYNT, 'fall to pieces,' N.E.D. 4, cp. "Our state to be dis-joynt and out of frame" Ham. I.2.20. BOTH THE WORLDS, 'both hemispheres,' 'the whole world,' cp. II.1.49; Delius explains as 'the terrestrial and the celestial worlds,' and illustrates by "both the worlds I give to negligence" Ham. IV.5.134. SUFFER: CL.Pr. glosses 'perish,' and perhaps rightly, citing "I have suffered with those I saw suffer" Temp.1.2.6. This meaning of the word, however, is an unusual extension of the sense 'suffer loss or injury.' The passage is here printed as in FO.I: the Cambridge Text makes a single verse of "But . . suffer"; we frequently have incomplete verses in Macbeth, and these two, one of four waves and one of two and a half, admirably suit the "extasie" of Macbeth's utterance. But if we read "th' worlds" and "th' fliction" (for which there is ample warrant in EL. prosody), ending the verses at "worlds" and "fear," the whole passage can be made metrical. ¶ 17 MEALE in EL.E. is often singular as here, cp. "Whose houres, whose bed, whose meale and exercise" Cor. IV.4.14. ¶ 18 TERR'BLE, as frequently in EL.E. ¶ 19 SHAKE, an anticipation of the "fitfull fever" below. ¶ 20 Many modern editors, quite missing the deep meaning in GAYNE OUR PEACE, would alter "peace" to 'state' or 'seat' or 'pangs'; others follow the 'place' of FOS. 2, 3, and 4. Macbeth's effort to "gayne peace" when there is no peace is the motive of his murder of Banquo; and now, as he looks back over the ten years of his reign, he thinks of Duncan's murder, too, as having been contrived to gain peace,—as it really was, a peace from his restless ambition,—the lurid light of his agony moulding the act into the form of this subsequent bitter experience. To alter the word to 'place' is almost as fatal as would be a change of "poore mallice," above, to 'sore malice.' HAVE SENT TO PEACE is a beautiful euphemism whose sense is fortunately not lost from MN.E. ¶ 21 TORTURE, i.e. the rack; Shakspeare uses the word as meaning an instrument of torture in "He calles for the tortures, what will you say without 'em?" All's W. IV.3.137. ¶ 22 RESTLESSE, 'that gives no rest,' cp. "restlesse cares" Rich.3 I.4.81. EXTASIE, 'madness,' 'the state of being out of one's mind,' cp. IV.3.170. Burton, 'Anat. of Mel.' I.1.i.4, does not define it clearly, though he leaves it to be inferred that ecstasy is a form of temporary mental alienation. The notion Mac-

But let the frame of things dis-joynt,  
Both the worlds suffer, 16  
Ere we will eate our meale in feare, and sleepe  
In the affliction of these terrible dreames  
That shake us nightly: better be with the  
dead,  
Whom we, to gayne our peace, have sent to  
peace,  
Then on the torture of the minde to lye  
In restlesse extasie. Duncane is in his grave;  
After life's fitfull fever he sleepes well;  
Treason has done his worst: nor steele nor  
poyson,  
Mallice domestique, forraine levie, nothing,  
Can touch him further.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

beth here expresses is found also in Meas. V. 1. 401: "But peace be with him! That life is better life, past fearing death, Than that which lives to feare"; Ben Jonson has the same idea in Every Man in his Humour, III. 3: "No greater hell than to be slave to feare." Montaigne, too, Florio's translation, I. xxiii, tells the story of how a fugitive gave himself up to his pursuers, "calling to minde . . . how much better it were for him to die once than live in such continuall feare and agonie," adding that this "were better . . . than remaine still in the continuall fit of such a fever that hath no remedie" (see the next note). ¶ 23 FITFULL FEVER has gone into the language from this passage with the stereotyped connotation of 'the feverish anxieties of life': but "fever" in EL. E. usually suggests the intermittent fever of an ague, hence the epithet "fitfull." In Shakspeare's time "fitfull" had not the general meaning of 'changing or spasmodic': according to N. E. D., Scott, 1810, is the first to use it in this sense. Both words had in EL. E. a special reference to insanity, which was formerly viewed as a periodic disease of the nature of a fever; see N. E. D. 'fit' 3 b. In Titus IV. 1. 17 we have: "Unlesse some fit or frenzie do possesse her," and in Temp. I. 2. 208: "Not a soule But felt a feaver of the madde and plaid Some tricks of desperation"; and see Lady Macbeth's words in III. 4. 55. The picture of Duncan's reign which Macbeth gives in I. 7. 16 ff. does not justify his description of Duncan's life as a "fitfull fever"; but Macbeth now reflects his own unrest upon all life. HE SLEEPES WELL: "he" and "well" have primary stress, and "sleepes" a heavy secondary stress, the rhythm reflecting the notion in the words. Shakspeare, in depicting these 'fine frenzies' of Macbeth, touches his language with a poetic magic reflecting the rich associations with which his overwrought thought is charged. ¶ 24 HIS is the EL. genitive of 'it.' The double NOR construction is still in use in poetry: 'neither . . . nor' is the corresponding MN. E. prose idiom. ¶ 25 MALLICE: see note to v. 14. DOMESTIQUE, i.e. 'at home': for the spelling see note to I. 3. 78. FORRAINE, 'abroad,' contrasted with "domestique": the word is now obsolete in this sense, see N. E. D. I b. This spelling is common in Shakspeare's time and represents the M. E. form, cp. O. FR. *foreign*: the *gn* of the modern form—it dates from the 16th century—is probably due to such words as 'sovereign,' 'reign.' LEVIE in MN. E. means 'a body of troops levied'; in EL. E.

it can mean 'the act of levying troops.' ¶ 26 TOUCH, 'harm,' 'injure,' a meaning frequent in Shakspeare; cp. IV. 3. 14 and "Seeing his reputation touch'd to death" Timon III. 5. 19.

## ACT III SCENE II 26—28

### LADY MACBETH

Come on,

Gentle my lord, sleeke o're your rugged  
looks;

Be bright and joviall among your guests to-  
night.

2.72; despite the colon after the word in FO. 1, it seems to have this sense here, cp. Lady Macbeth's "You must leave this" in v. 35. Lady Macbeth recognizes in her husband's overwrought language and distorted features the imminence of one of his hallucination periods, and tries to guide his thoughts into safer channels. ¶ 27 GENTLE MY LORD is common EL. word order for 'my noble lord,' cp. "gracious my lord" V. 5. 30. SLEEKE, 'smooth out,' cp. "To sleek (make sleek), *laevigo*" Coles, and "A locksmith . . . smotheth [glossed "maketh sleek" in margin and referred to as "to sleek" in index] the roughnesse with a plane" Comenius, 'Janua' 532; Drayton in 'Barrons Warres' III. 47 also has "sleek every little dimple of the lake" (cited by Cent. Dict.). RUGGED, 'wrinkled': Comenius, 'Janua' 77, speaks of the earth as being "cragged or rugged," translating *confragosa*; and Spenser in the Prologue to Book IV of the Faerie Queene writes "The rugged

¶ 26 COME ON in EL. E. can correspond to 'come!' 'have done with this,' cp. "Come on, sir knave, have done your foolishnes" Err. I.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

forhead that with grave foresight Wiolds kingdomes, causes, and affaires of state" (cited by the Cent. Dict.); Cotgrave defines *rugueux* by "rugged, wrinkled"; the Glossographia gives "rugosity; ruggedness, a being full of wrinkles." So we are not justified in assuming that LOOKES is a misprint for 'locks' even though Shakspeare has elsewhere used "rugged" to mean 'ruffled.' ¶ 28 is a six-wave verse unless we read "'mong" for AMONG.

¶ 30 REMEMBRANCE (four syllables, cp. note to 1.5.40), 'consideration,' as in "One thus descended . . we did commend To your remembrances" Cor. II. 3. 253. APPLY, 'attend assiduously,' N.E.D. 15. ¶ 31 PRESENT, 'show,' cp. "Yet oftentimes it [i.e. your fault] doth present harsh rage" 1 Hen. 4 III. 1. 183. EMINENCE, 'deference,' cp. "Equity is a due to people as eminency is to princes" Ward, 1647, cited in N.E.D. s.v. 'eminency' 6. ¶ 32 UNSAFE THE WHILE, etc., has caused great difficulty to Shakspeare editors, and various far-fetched attempts have been made to botch the text into M.N.E. sense. But such syntax as we have here, through which both subject and predicate are left to be supplied mentally from the context, is not uncommon in E.L.E. Another such idiom appears in III. 4. 31, "[he hath] no teeth for th' present"; also in Tro. & Cr. IV. 4. 57, "[there is] no remedy"; and in Jonson's Every Man in his Humour, III. 3 (cited above), "[there is] no greater hell than to be slave to fear"; likewise in Burton's Anatomy, I. 2. ii. 7, 'Nothing better than moderate sleep, nothing worse than it if it be in extremes.' And such instances could be indefinitely multiplied. The thought, then, resumes that of v. 29, 'I shall be jovial and so, I pray, be you; but we are insecure so long as we,' etc. The use of SAFE in the sense of 'secure' has already been noted. It is Macbeth's insecurity that is gall and wormwood to him. THE WHILE is adverbially used in M.E. and E.N.E., and here means 'so long as,' THAT being the strengthening particle. In FO. I there is a comma after "that," which has led modern editors to read "that" as tantamount to 'in that.' But in E.L. punctuation a subordinate clause, no matter what its relation to the context, is cut off by commas. Macbeth is thinking of Banquo's "being" as the menace to his peace. Vv. 31, 32 are here printed as in FO. I: the Cambridge Text prints Unsafe . . we, an imperfect verse, followed by Must . . streams, a complete one. ¶ 34 VIZARDS, 'masks,' cp. L.L.L. V. 2. 242. ¶ 35 YOU MUST LEAVE THIS, 'you must cease to think of this,' N.E.D. 'leave' 11; cp. "But leaving this, what is your grace's pleasure?" Rich. 3 III. 7. 108. ¶ 37 Again the singular verb with the plural subject. ¶ 38 NATURE'S COPPIE S NOT ETERNE, 'life's tenure in them is terminable': Lady Macbeth uses legal phraseology; "copy" in E.L.E. was a 'holding

## ACT III SCENE II 29-38

### MACBETH

So shall I, love; and so, I pray, be you:  
Let your remembrance apply to Banquo;  
Present him eminence, both with eye and  
tongue:

Unsafe the while that wee must lave  
Our honors in these flattering streames,  
And make our faces vizards to our hearts,  
Disguising what they are.

### LADY MACBETH

You must leave this.

### MACBETH

O, full of scorpions is my minde, deare wife!  
Thou know'st that Banquo and his Fleans  
lives.

### LADY MACBETH

But in them nature's coppie's not eterne.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

by copy,' which, as defined by Cowel, is "a tenure for which the tenant hath nothing to show but the copy of the Rolls made by the Steward of the Lord's Court [i.e. the manorial court-roll]." Cowel says that these copyholds vary with the customs of the manor, which are infinite; some of them are "fineable at will"; some "certain," i.e. the next of blood inherits on payment of a customary fine. NATURE, here used in its common EL. sense of 'life,' is thought of as residing in Banquo and Fleance as if holding a manorial tenancy from the Sovereign of Life. Lady Macbeth remarks that this tenure is terminable, darkly hinting at a "deed of dreadfull note." And by this hint not only does she show that she has read the thought which lies behind her husband's "Thou know'st that Banquo and his Fleans lives," but she also includes herself in this second plot, and invites her share of the doom which follows. In her delirium (cp. V. I) she is haunted by the murder of Banquo as well as by the blood of Duncan. ETERNE, an earlier form of 'eternal,' O.FR. *eterne*,

which was evidently becoming archaic in Shakspeare's time, as he uses it only here and in Ham. II. 2. 512; but it is not uncommon in EL. prose and poetry, see N.E.D. I.

## ACT III SCENE II 39-44

### MACBETH

There's comfort yet; they are assaileable;  
Then bethou jocund: ere the bat hath flowne  
His cloyster'd flight, ere to black Heccat's  
summons

The shard-borne beetle with his drowsie hums  
Hath rung night's yawning peale, there shall  
be done

A deed of dreadfull note.

### LADY MACBETH

What's to be done?

¶ 40 JOCUND, 'well pleased,' 'joyful,' see N.E.D. b. ¶ 41 CLOYSTER'D, 'confined to cloisters,' 'cloister haunting,' a curious use of the word. TO, 'in accord with,' 'in obedience to,' cp. "a souldier Even to Cato's [FO. I "calves"] wish" Cor. I. 4. 56. BLACK, cp. "Blacke is the badge of hell, the hue of dungeons, and the schoole [an EL. variant spelling of "skull," "headarmour"]

of night" L.L.L. IV. 3. 254. HECCAT, again the dissyllabic form with stress on the first syllable; cp. note to II. I. 52. ¶ 42 Many of the earlier commentators of Shakspeare took the SHARD-BORNE BEETLE for a scarab or sort of tumble-bug born in 'shards' or rubbish. But the reference to the insect's "drowsie hums" in the evening shows that it is the tree-beetle that Shakspeare means. He distinguishes this insect from other beetles by describing it as borne up by "shards," or scaly wing-cases. Beetles and locusts were not sharply distinguished in Shakspeare's time, and it is the locust or *hanneton* which Muffet thus describes in his 'Insectorum Theatrum': "The tree beetle is very common and everywhere to be met with, especially in the moneths of July and August after sunset: for then it flyeth giddily in men's faces with a great humming and loud noise." Cotgrave, s.v. *hanneton*, speaks of their scaly wing-cases as a characteristic. Ben Jonson refers to their wing-cases as "habergeons" in "The scaly beetles, with their habergeons, That make a humming murmur as they fly," and makes them the instruments of witches in The Sad Shepherd II. 2. SHARD is not an uncommon name of the elytrum of the beetle: Shakspeare uses it in Ant. & Cl. III. 2. 20, "They are his shards and he their beetle," and in Cym. III. 3. 20, "The sharded-beetle." Chapman, 1614 (cited by Steevens), reflects a popular superstition that associates this insect with death bodings: "The beetle . . . with his knoll-like [i.e. knell-like] humming gave the dor of death to men [gave them the mock of death, i.e. sleep]," hence "hath rung night's yawning peale." ¶ 43 YAWNING, 'drowsy,' cp. Coles, "yawning, *oscitabundus*," and "The lazie yawning drone" Hen. 5 I. 2. 204. ¶ 44 NOTE, 'importance,' cp. "he is one of the noblest note" Cym. I. 6. 22.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶45 INNOCENT, a dissyllable. DEAREST CHUCK is a term of endearment used also in L.L.L. V.2.667 and Hen.5 III.2.25. ¶46 With an exquisite transition, Shakspeare makes Macbeth demand of nature the same secrecy which he has been asking of Lady Macbeth. SEELING is an EL. term of falconry denoting the sewing up of the hawk's eyelids. It had a general application to hoodwinking, however, as is shown by Cotgrave's "*siller les yeux*, to seele or sew up the eye-lids and thence also to hoodwinke, blind, keepe in darknesse, deprive of sight," cp. "to seele her father's eyes up close as oake" Oth.III.3.210. ¶47

## ACT III SCENE II 45-56

### MACBETH

Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,  
Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling  
night,

Skarfe up the tender eye of pittifull day,  
And with thy bloodie and invisible hand  
Cancell and teare to pieces that great bond  
Which keepes me pale! Light thickens, and  
the crow

Makes wing to th' rookie wood:  
Good things of day begin to droope and  
drowse,  
Whiles night's black agents to their preys  
doe rowse.

Thou marvell'st at my words: but hold thee  
still;  
Things bad begun make strong themselves  
by ill:  
So, prythee, goe with me.

EXEUNT

"Cancell his bond of life, deere God, I pray" Rich.3 IV.4.77, and in "great powres . . . take this life and cancell these cold bonds" Cym.V.4.26. Macbeth invokes night, whom he now thinks of as death, to cancel the bond of Banquo's life and thus tear in pieces the deed (cp. N.E.D. 'bond' 9) by which the 'great powers' have bound themselves to confer the sovereignty on Banquo's issue. In this latter sense of 'instrument of obligation' the word "bond" had a wider application in EL.E. than in MN.E., e.g. in The Merchant of Venice a promissory note is a bond, and we have "take a bond of fate" in IV.1.84. The blending of two meanings of a word or phrase in a harmonious union so close as to present but a single idea is a characteristic of Shakspeare's English. It is the implied obligation in the witches' prophecy that keeps Macbeth pale, and his words here are but the nearer echo of his invocation of the powers of darkness and ruin to champion him to the uttermost. In the literal sense Banquo's bond of life includes Fleance's also; and when they embrace the fate of their dark hour death will cancel the great bond by making it impossible of fulfilment, and thus will Macbeth cheat the powers

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

of destiny. The verse division of FO. I for vv. 50 and 51 is "Which . . thickens, And . . wood"; the modern verse division, 'Which . . crow, Makes . . wood,' is Rowe's. Some editors, convinced that "Makes . . wood" is a verse accidentally incomplete, attempt to restore it: Keightley clapped to it the patch 'on earth below,' binding woolsey on a coat of silk. The broken line would come more naturally after "pale," but that would make v. 51 a verse of six waves, so perhaps Rowe's division is the better. ¶ 50 THICKENS, 'becomes obscure,' cp. "thy luster thickens When he shines by" Ant. & Cl. II. 3. 27. ¶ 51 ROOKIE: a large class of adjectives in EL. E. were formed by adding -y to a noun or to another adjective stem with the sense of 'abounding in,' 'full of,' 'characterized by'; e.g. "helly" for hell-like, Heywood's Hercules Furens, Sp. Soc., p. 14, "shellye," abounding in shoals, *ibid.*, p. 15, "dampy," full of damp, Drayton's Heroicall Epistles, p. 53; so "roundy" Sidney's Arcadia, "hugy" Peele's Clyomon and Clamydes, and a host of others. Most of these have disappeared in MN. E. The MN. E. distinction between a crow, 'a large black bird that feeds on carrion,' and a rook, *corvus frugilegus*, does not seem to have been always observed in EL. E. Rooks are still called crows in northern England and Scotland, and crow is still the generic name for both rooks and crows in the United States. Shakspeare calls the boy who frightens away the rooks a "crow-keeper" in Rom. & Jul. I. 4. 6, and Kersey, 1708, defines a rook as a "bird that preys upon carrion." There is, therefore, no inconsistency in Shakspeare's making CROWS fly to the ROOKIE WOOD as Steevens supposed, and such emendations as 'rook i' th', 'reeky,' 'murky,' etc., for "rookie" are fortunately unnecessary here. Other editors with some reason have thought that ROOKIE was the EL. form of the M. E. word found in the Promptorium Parvulorum: "roky or mysty, *nebulosus*," "roke, myste, *nebula*." This word, at least in its noun form, was current in literary EL. E., as is shown by Levin's Manipulus Vocabulorum, 1570, which glosses *pruina* by "ye hore roke," i.e. the mist which settles over hoar-frost. Kersey has it in 1708: "roke, as 'To make one's self all in a roke,' i.e. to put one's self into a great sweat." The word is still common in dialects and is used by Tennyson: see Cent. Dict. It is quite possible, therefore, that "rookie" of FO. I is a printer's error for 'roakie' or 'rokie,' as may be the "schoole" for 'schole' in I. 7. 6. And here, as in I. 7. 6, it happens that both words make good Shaksperian sense, 'the cawing rooks' or 'the evening mists.' But as the text is for "rookie," pronounced almost as in MN. E., instead of 'rokie' (rhyming with 'smoky'), perhaps it is better to adhere to the former interpretation. Any one who has noticed the rooks settling down for the night into the tops of tall elm trees, as they do, for instance, in the trees about Magdalen College, will not have difficulty in understanding Shakspeare's "rookie wood." ¶ 52 GOOD THINGS OF DAY seems to be a reminiscence of a passage from Euripides current in EL. E.; Steevens cites it from Ascham's Toxophilus: "Il thynges the nyght, good thynges the day doth haunt and use." ¶ 53 BLACK AGENTS, 'dark influences.' PREYS (misprinted "prey's" in FO. I): the usual EL. distributive plural, cp. note to III. I. 122. ¶ 54 MARVELL'ST: the second personal verb ending was often thus syncopated in M. E. and e. N. E.; such forms are now usually confined to short words like 'dost,' 'hast,' etc. HOLD THEE STILL, 'have patience,' probably in anticipation of such a protest from Lady Macbeth as in III. 2. 35. ¶ 55 BAD, the EL. adverb. ¶ 56 PRYTHEE, cp. note to I. 7. 45. This is the second time that, as the dark and evil powers of his character rouse themselves to their task, Macbeth reflects his mood of darkness upon the face of nature. In II. I. 49 ff., as he goes to murder Duncan, dead nature, deceiving dreams, witchcraft, pale Hecate, stalking murder, the howling wolf, the dull and sleepy earth add their present horror to the time. So here, with a few touches of association,—and it is marvellous how few they are: the deepening light, the cawing rooks, plants and animals drooping and drowsing to healthy rest while the mysterious forces of darkness stir themselves to their nightly activity,—Shakspeare tunes Macbeth's soul into unison with the mysterious powers of evil that fly by night. It is this mystery of evil, this bloody and invisible hand of the night groping for human souls out of that realm of dark imagination to which the human mind has

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

given a local habitation and a name in its eerie folk-lore, that is the deep undercurrent of interest, lending, even at this late day, a sort of fascination to the tragedy of Macbeth. We catch an early glimpse of this eerie world as we learn in childhood the story of Saul and the witch of Endor, and there are indeed few of us who ever quite forget its essential tragedy.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SCENE III

The scene begins *in medias res*: the murderers have already met and planned their attack; the third murderer has instructed the other two as to just what they are to do, vv. 2 and 3. He himself does not seem to take an actual part in the encounter, but merely superintends it: this points strongly to his being Macbeth's "perfect spy." It is he who has planned out the details; it is he who knows the courtiers' habit of walking through the palace yard. When Macbeth speaks to the two in III. I. 129 ff. he gives them no plan of action: he only asks them to make up their minds. This third murderer must therefore be "the perfect spy o' th' time" referred to in III. I. 30, or 'a perfect spy of the time' in Macbeth's employ introduced here in order to give the scene more lifelikeness. The far-fetched theory that the third murderer is Macbeth himself disguised (!) has nothing to recommend it save its ingenuity. Any such mystery would have needed a commentator to explain it, since there are evidently no asides in the action, and any distinction of dress would have betrayed Macbeth to his fellow-murderers at the moment when it disclosed him to the audience.

## SCENE III: A PARK NEAR THE PALACE ENTER THREE MURDERERS

I-4

### FIRST MURDERER

¶1 BUT marks the sharp turn of suspicion that crosses the mind of the first murderer as the new accession to their party finishes his directions.

¶2 -HE NEEDES NOT OUR MISTRUST, 'there is no reason why we should mistrust him'; such e.N.E. syntax grew out of the development of M.E. impersonal idioms into e.N.E. personal forms of thinking. Such an expression

as "it needeth not that we mistruste him," i.e. there is no reason that, etc., became "he needes not our mistrust"; the *opus est* meaning of 'needs' is now quite obsolete, and such a phrase as we have here in MN.E. seems like a clumsy figure of speech, and such expressions as "What need the bridge much broder then the flood?" i.e. Why should the bridge be broader than the stream? Ado I. I. 318, and "What need these tricks?" Tro.&Cr. V. I. 14, appear to us sheer nonsense. DELIVERS, 'describes,' N.E.D. II, cp. "I . . . heard the old shepheard deliver the manner how he found it" Wint. T. V. 2. 4. ¶3 OFFICES, 'parts,' cp. "this is thy office, Beare thee well in it" Ado III. I. 12. ¶4 TO, 'according



UT who did bid thee joine with us?

THIRD MURDERER  
Macbeth.

### SECOND MURDERER

He needes not our mistrust, since he delivers  
Our offices and what we have to doe  
To the direction just.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

ACT III SCENE III 4-16

FIRST MURDERER

Then stand with us.

The west yet glimmers with some streaks  
of day:

Now spurres the lated traveller apace  
To gayne the timely inne, and neere approaches  
The subject of our watch.

THIRD MURDERER

Hearke! I heare horses.

BANQUO

WITHIN

Give us a light there, hoa!

SECOND MURDERER

Then 't is hee: the rest

That are within the note of expectation  
Alreadie are i' th' court.

FIRST MURDERER

His horses goe about.

THIRD MURDERER

Almost a mile: but he does usually,  
So all men doe, from hence to th' pallace gate  
Make it their walke.

ENTER BANQUO AND FLEANS WITH A TORCH

SECOND MURDERER

A light, a light!

THIRD MURDERER

'T is hee.

FIRST MURDERER

Stand too't.

BANQUO

It will be rayne to night.

to, 'a common M. E. and E. N. E. meaning of the preposition. THE, probably equivalent to 'his' or 'our.' JUST, 'exactly,' 'precisely,' see N. E. D. 2, whose citation from Sternhold and Hopkins's Psalmes, 1549-1562, "The Lord . . knoweth our shape, Our mould and fashion just," shows that the position of the adverb is not anomalous in E. L. E.

¶ 4 The first murderer's STAND WITH US seems to be proposed as a test of the new arrival's sincerity. ¶ 6 LATED is not an aphetic form of 'belated,' used here for rhythm's sake, but a not uncommon participial adjective in -ed, 'made late.' It occurs also in Ant. & Cl. III. II. 3. ¶ 7 TIMELY, 'opportune,' 'welcome,' cp. Coles, "timely, opportunus." ¶ 8 SUBJECT is frequently used in E. L. E. where M. N. E. prefers 'object,' cp. "To be shame's scorn and subject of mischance" I Hen. 6. IV. 6. 49. ¶ 9 HOA is Banquo's call to his attendants, who are taking the horses around by the road; the word is extra-metrical: FO. I makes THE REST part of the following verse. ¶ 10 WITHIN THE NOTE, 'comprised in the list,' cp. "mace, dates, none; that's out of my note" Wint. T. IV. 3. 49. OF EXPECTATION, 'of the expected guests,' cp. "The utmost man of expectation," i. e. the full complement of the soldiers we expected, 2 Hen. 4. I. 3. 65. This meaning of the

word has been overlooked by the N. E. D. ¶ II I' TH' COURT, 'at the palace,' N. E. D. 5. ABOUT, 'by a circuitous way,' cp. "I was forc'd to wheele Three or foure miles about" Cor. I. 6. 19. ¶ 14 THEIR would be 'his' in M. N. E. The syntax is similar to that explained in the note to I. 3. 144. A LIGHT, the torch that Fleance is carrying. ¶ 16 IT WILL BE RAYNE, 'there will be rain'; the impersonal idiom in M. E. could have "it" for its subject, and this form of it survived into E. N. E.; cp. the German locution 'es giebt.'

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶ 16 LET IT COME DOWNE is probably said with ironical double meaning—'let the blow fall.' ¶ 17 TRECHERIE, 'treach'ry.' ¶ 18 The Macbeth tradition made Fleance flee to Wales, cp. "About this time also Fleance, from whom the later kings of Scotland are descended, fled from his tyranny into Wales: where by Nest, daughter to Griffith ap Lewlyn, then Prince of all Wales, he had Walter, first Lord Steward of Scotland" Slatyer's *Palæalbion*, 1619, p. 282. Holinshed also makes Fleance escape, not at the time of the murder, but later. ¶ 20 WE HAVE LOST was probably intended for a contraction, 'we've lost.' ¶ 21 BEST HALFE: the partitive superlative frequently appears in E.L.E. without the definite article, as here, cp. "I am grieved to see how we employ most part of our time" Florio's *Montaigne*, I. xxv.

## ACT III

## SCENE III

16-22

### FIRST MURTHURER

Let it come downe.

THEY SET UPON BANQUO

### BANQUO

O, trecherie! Flye, good Fleance, flye, flye, flye,  
Thou may'st revenge. O slave!

DIES. FLEANS ESCAPES

### THIRD MURTHURER

Who did strike out the light?

### FIRST MURTHURER

Was't not the way?

### THIRD MURTHURER

There's but one downe; the sonne is fled.

### SECOND MURTHURER

We have lost

Best halfe of our affaire.

### FIRST MURTHURER

Well, let's away and say how much is done.

EXEUNT

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SCENE IV

The scene that follows is really the critical point of the play. Macbeth's insanity now becomes a menace to his personal security, and the other 'tortures of his mind' pale before a greater torture when he becomes aware that the "fits" which he suffers from have become matters of public comment, and that now he cannot help betraying himself and unfolding all the dark horrors of his life to the public gaze. His terrible dreams have now invaded the daylight. His will, whose impotence to restrain his own evil ambitions he becomes aware of in the first act of the play, is now the active agent of powers which, fight against it as he may, are assuring his own destruction. How frequent the fits must be Shakspeare contrives to show us in presenting but one: what anxieties they cause the guilty pair and how impossible of control they are appears later from the sleep-walking scene where Lady Macbeth exclaims "you marre all with this starting." Shakspeare here, as in *Hamlet*, presents the tragic Nemesis as an instrument of torture wrought out of the material of the victim's own character. But not only Macbeth, Lady Macbeth likewise becomes the victim of "even-handed justice." She has instigated the murder of Duncan, embarking her husband on his career of bloodshed; she 'goes with him' in his murder of Banquo; she accedes to his designs against Macduff as implied in his notion of wading on through the stream of blood—perhaps a helpless accession, but none the less conscious, as she shows in the sleep-walking scene. She has enjoyed the first fruits of their common crime, as we see from the well-borne queenly dignity with which Shakspeare endues her; and in her

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

anxiety to shield her husband from the consequences of his self-betrayal, she drinks of the cup that Nemesis commends to the lips of Macbeth. And with the close of the scene, like the primeval pair who left Eden "hand in hand with wandring steps and slow," they together enter into their heritage of bitterness 'but young in deed,' novitiates in suffering.

## SCENE IV: THE HALL IN THE PALACE BANQUET PREPAR'D: ENTER MACBETH LADY MACBETH ROSSE LENOX LORDS AND ATTENDANTS

I-6

MACBETH



YOU know your owne degrees; sit  
downe: at first  
And last the hearty welcome.

LORDS

Thankes to your majesty.

MACBETH

Our selfe will mingle with society  
And play the humble host.  
Our hostesse keepes her state, but in best time  
We will require her welcome.

¶ I DEGREES, 'rank,' 'order of precedence,' N.E.D. 4, cp. "O that estates, degrees and offices Were not deriv'd corruptly" Merch. II. 9. 41; the plural form is used as it is in "preys" III. 2. 53. SIT DOWNE not only seems inapposite as coming from the king, but makes the rhythm difficult, forcing either two incomplete verses as in FO. I, You . . downe, At . . welcome, or a bad verse division in the middle of a phrase, "At

first And last," as in the Cambridge Text, or an alexandrine, You . . last, Delius. It may be an extra-metrical phrase, cp. note to III. 1. 40, or is possibly an actor's direction intruded from the margin. AT FIRST AND LAST: the phrase occurs also in "I, greefe, I feare me, both at first and last," i.e. Aye, I fear this matter will be first and last a trouble to the state, I Hen. 6 V. 5. 102. One would naturally expect Macbeth to give his pledge 'to first and last' after having referred to the various degrees of his nobility. But AT in its M.E. sense of 'apud,' 'in the presence of,' is not cited in N.E.D. later than 1580, though there is obviously an EL. survival of this sense in the idiom "to do at one," cp. "What will she do at me, *quid faciet mihi*," "What wouldst thou do at him, *quid illo facias*" Phr. Gen.; the phrase is also given in Coles. Moreover, even if current in the sense of 'apud,' the "at" would normally be understood as part of an adverbial phrase if coming before "first." Johnson was for taking "at first" with "sit downe," and altering "last" to 'next'; but this construction makes lame sense, besides departing from the FO. texts and punctuation. Other editors alter "at" to 'to' or to 'and.' But probably Shakspeare was merely preparing for Macbeth to take his place among his guests as "humble host" instead of sitting in state on the dais above them, so as to provide for his asides to the murderer and his attempt to take Banquo's empty seat: as royal host he pledges the court 'once for all.' ¶ 2 THE . . WELCOME: the definite article seems to have been used to mark a certain formality, 'the pledge of welcome'; one editor changes it to 'a' in this passage, and most editors remove it from the text in Tro. & Cr. III. 3. 168: "the welcome ever smiles and farewell [FO. I "farewells"] goes out sighing." ¶ 3 OUR SELFE, the majesty plural of the reflexive used as personal pronoun. MINGLE WITH, 'associate with,' cp. "Mingled his royaltie with carping fooles" I Hen. 4 III. 2. 63. SOCIETY, 'company,' cp. "My riots past, my wilde societies" Merry W. III. 4. 8. ¶ 4 HUMBLE: Macbeth will lay aside his royalty.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶5 STATE frequently in EL.E. means 'chair of state,' 'throne,' cp. "This chayre shall bee my state" I Hen.4 II.4.415, and Marston's Antonio and Mellida, II.i, stage direction: "Forobosco ushers the duke to his state." IN BEST TIME seems to be a superlative form of 'in good time,' i.e. when the feast is at its height (another instance of the EL. superlative without the definite article). ¶6 REQUIRE, 'ask for,' a usual sense of the word in EL.E. WELCOME, i.e. pledge of welcome.

## ACT III SCENE IV

7-15

¶8 THEY ARE, probably contracted to 'they're.' ¶9 ENCOUNTER seems to be used here in the sense of 'address,' N.E.D.7, cp. "I could . . have charg'd him At the sixt houre of morne, at noone, at midnight, T'en-counter me with orisons, for then I am in heaven for him" Cym. I.3.25 ff. But there may be in the word a suggestion of 'countering' in the sense of 'retorting to,' N.E.D. 'counter' 4, or of singing an accompaniment to a melody, N.E.D. 'counter,' v., 2, as the forms of 'counter' and 'encounter' were confused in EL.E. The latter meaning beautifully fits the Cymbeline passage. Macbeth speaks as the lords stand to pledge the queen. THEIR

LADY MACBETH  
Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our friends,  
For my heart speakes they are welcome.

ENTER FIRST MURTHURER  
MACBETH  
See, they encounter thee with their harts'  
thanks.

Both sides are even: heere I'le sit i'th' mid'st:  
Be large in mirth; anon wee'l drinke a mea-  
sure

The table round. TO MURTHURER

There's blood upon thy face.  
MURTHURER

'T is Banquo's then.

MACBETH  
'T is better thee without then he within.  
Is he dispatch'd?

has full stress, contrasting with MY in the previous verse. ¶10 BOTH SIDES ARE EVEN goes with the preceding line in FO.I, which has no mark of punctuation after THANKS; v.9 in the FO. is closely spaced and its last letter comes to the edge of the column measure, so a period may have been lost in the exigencies of printing, and Macbeth's words be, as they are always understood to be, a dramatic explanation of his reason for taking Banquo's empty chair at the head of the table. But they could well be a playful reference to the result of the 'countering' between Lady Macbeth and the court, and his "sit i'th' mid'st" be a punning allusion to his taking neutral ground in the contest of compliment. ¶11 LARGE, 'unrestrained,' N.E.D. II, cp. "Your praises are too large" Wint.T. IV.4.147. ANON, 'in a moment': as he rises to give the pledge which Lady Macbeth in v.33 chides him for delaying, he catches sight of the murderer at the door and walks toward him. The blood upon the murderer's face is probably one of Macbeth's delusions. ¶14 'T IS BETTER THEE WITHOUT THEN HE WITHIN has been interpreted in various ways: 'T is better for you to be outside the banquet-hall, dangerous to me as your presence may be, than for Banquo to be one of my guests,' 'T is better that blood should be on thy face than that Banquo should be in the hall,' and 'T is better the blood should be outside thee than within him.' The last of these is the most apposite: but the nominative "he" governed by the preposition "within" is anomalous English. Confusions between the objective and the nominative cases of the personal pronoun after "than" were not uncommon in literary EL.E. (they are still to be

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

found in colloquial MN.E., educated persons being often in doubt whether to say 'better than I' or 'better than me'), and the nominative for the accusative after a preposition also occurs in such a careful writer as Ben Jonson: "It hath been otherwise between you and I" Sejanus v.10. But Shakspeare's locution goes further, for it is not here a case of subject or object of an implied clause, or object of a quasi-preposition, if "within" be a preposition and not an adverb. Perhaps, therefore, it is better to understand Macbeth's remark as an aside when he recognizes in the blood-stained murderer's presence

## ACT III SCENE IV 16-25

MURDERER

My lord, his throat is cut; that I did for him.

MACBETH

Thou art the best o' th' cut-throats: yet  
hee's good

That did the like for Fleans: if thou did'st it,  
Thou art the non-pareill.

MURDERER

Most royall sir,  
Fleas is scap'd.

MACBETH .

ASIDE

Then comes my fit againe: I had else beene  
perfect,

Whole as the marble, founded as the rocke,  
As broad and generall as the casing ayre:  
But now I am cabin'd, crib'd, confin'd,  
bound in

To sawcy doubts and feares.

TO MURDERER

But Banquo's safe?

at the door a less danger than would be the menace of Banquo's presence at the feast, than to convict Shakspeare of anomalous English.

¶ 17 There is a grimness in Macbeth's jest about CUT-THROATS and his use of the word NON-PAREILL below, 'the star of your profession'; cp. "he himsele Cals her a non-pareill" Temp. III.2. 107, and "non-pareil, that has no equal" Glossographia.

¶ 20 SCAP'D is not, as usually printed, a poetic shortening for 'escaped,' but is a normal EL. form representing M.E. "scapen" and preserved in MN.E. 'scapegrace.' ¶ 21 The AGAINE has a pathetic significance, 'another paroxysm of madness,' another attack of his insanity. In construing this passage the EL. notion of insanity must be borne in mind, see note to III.2.23 and "Unlesse some fit or frenzie do possesse her" Titus IV.1.17. ¶ 21 ff. We have here one of those rapidly moving metaphors, so common in Shakspeare, by

which various aspects of a notion are linked together through common associations: PERFECT, 'in sound mental health,' 'sane,' cp. "I feare I am not in my perfect mind" Lear IV.7.63; health suggests the 'wholeness,' flawlessness, soundness of marble, and this the stability of the rock not to be disturbed by tempests; the tempests suggest the encasing air, and this notion passes into that of a prison, where Macbeth is confined in a filthy hovel with impudent and base-born knaves, "sawcy doubts and feares," as his fellow-prisoners. ¶ 23 BROAD, 'free,' 'unrestrained by restless fears,' cp. III.6.21. GENERALL, 'unrestricted,' 'unlimited,' cp. "a generall, honest thought" Cæs.v.5.71, and "Whose private [i.e. personal interests] with me of the dolphines love Is much more generall then these lines import" John IV.3.17. ¶ 24 CABIN in EL.E. is a common name for a prison cell. In the authorized version of Jeremiah XXVII.16 it is still retained in this sense: "When Jeremiah was entered into the dungeon and into the cabins." CRIB denotes a hovel,

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

cp. "Why rather, sleepe, lyst thou in smoakie cribs?" 2Hen.4 III.1.9. BOUND IN TO, 'confined with,' cp. "To night she is mewd up to her heaviness" Rom.&Jul. III.4.11. ¶ 25 SAWCY, 'insolent,' a somewhat stronger word than it is now, cp. III.5.3. The torture which Macbeth endures is that of a criminal close confined in narrow quarters with insulting cell-mates, who mock him day and night with their insolent jibes. The association of restriction and restraint suggests the thought that at least Banquo is 'restricted' and can no longer do him harm, cp. "*Bullingbrooke, drawing.* Villaine, I'll make thee safe! *Aum.* Stay thy revengefull hand; thou hast no cause to feare" Rich.2 V.3.41 ff.

## ACT III

## SCENE IV

26-32

### MURDERER

I, my good lord: safe in a ditch he bides,  
With twenty trenched gashes on his head,  
The least a death to nature.

¶ 27 TRENCHED, 'deep cut,' not mere 'scorchings,' cp. "the wide wound that the boare had trencht In his soft flanke" Ven.&Ad.1052. ¶ 28 NATURE, the life principle of the body, cp. note to II.2.7. ¶ 29 WORME, a usual EL. word for serpent, cp. "I wish you all joy of the worme" Ant.&Cl.V.2.261. ¶ 30 NATURE: cp. note to II.4.16. ¶ 31 NO TEETH FOR TH'

### MACBETH

Thankes for that.

There the growne serpent lyes; the worme  
that's fled

Hath nature that in time will venom breed,  
No teeth for th' present. Get thee gone: to  
morrow

Wee'll heare our selves againe.

EXIT MURDERER

PRESENT: for the omitted subject and predicate cp. note to III.2.32. ¶ 32 WEE'LL HEARE OUR SELVES AGAINE: in the present state of our knowledge of EL. idiom it is difficult to fix the meaning of this phrase. HEARE may possibly mean 'listen to,' 'hearken to,' N.E.D. 4 b, with OUR SELVES used reciprocally; cp. "as we walke To our owne selves bend we our needefull talke" Tro.&Cr. IV.4.141; or OUR SELVES may be majesty plural for 'myself': the form "our selves" for 'ourselves' occurs also in Rich.2 I.1.16, "our selves will heare Th' accuser and the accused," and in Rich.2 III.3.127 the Quartos read "our selves" in "We doe abase our selfe," etc. The statements of grammarians that "our selves" is not a proper form of the majesty plural of the reflexive pronoun, and of Cl. Pr. that we require 'our self' if Macbeth's words are to be taken as meaning 'I myself,' are therefore incorrect. There is another possibility, viz. that "We will heare our selves" is a majesty plural of 'I will hear me,' the EL. ethical dative idiom referred to in the note to II.1.5—see the idiom in the citation given there from the 'Arcadia'—the MN.E. of which would be 'I will give you audience again to-morrow.' Some editors put in a comma after "heare" and make the words an absolute idiom, "our selves againe," i.e. when I am myself again. To this it is objected that Shakspeare would hardly make Macbeth take the murderer into his confidence in the way that this interpretation implies; but "our selves againe" may well be the completion of the thought in Macbeth's own mind, muttered as the murderer goes away from the door and heard by the audience as an aside—one of those pathetic 'to-morrow' thoughts that light fools the way to dusty death, as he bitterly says later: 'To morrow, when I shall be well and the fit be past.' That he is in one of his abstracted fits when coming back to the table is clear from Lady Macbeth's next words, and it is quite possible that it begins as the murderers leave him. There are thus four possible interpretations of these words, and all of them grammatically justifiable. The last is the most apposite, for it gives the maximum of interest to Macbeth's remark.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

ACT III SCENE IV 32-45

LADY MACBETH

My royall lord,

You do not give the cheere: the feast is sold

That is not often vouch'd while 't is a making,

'T is given with welcome. To feede were best at home;

From thence, the sawce to meate is ceremony;

Meeting were bare without it.

ENTER THE GHOST OF BANQUO  
AND SITS IN MACBETH'S PLACE

MACBETH

Sweet remembrancer!

Now good digestion waite on appetite,  
And health on both!

LENOX

May 't please your highnesse sit.

MACBETH

Here had we now our countries honor roof'd,  
Were the grac'd person of our Banquo present;

Who may I rather challenge for unkindnesse  
Then pittie for mischance.

ROSSE

His absence, sir,

Layes blame upon his promise. Pleas 't your highnesse

To grace us with your royall company?

¶ 33 CHEERE, 'the toast of welcome,' N.E.D. 5, cp. "So guiltlesse shee securely gives good cheare And reverend welcome to her princely guest" *Lucr.* 89. Lady Macbeth refers to the interrupted toast and recalls her husband to a sense of his surroundings. He has forgotten all about the pledge he proposed when the sight of the murderer's face interrupted him, and there is a certain impatience at his absent-mindedness in Lady Macbeth's words. ¶ 35 'T IS, 'that it is': the 'that' is often omitted in M.E. and e.N.E. where it is required in MN.E. GIVEN is one of those -en words which often in EL.E. have but one impulse, 'giv'n,' see note to I.5.39. FEEDER, merely to 'eat,' but not so coarse a word as it now is in MN.E., cp. "Sit downe and feed, and welcome to our table" *A.Y.L.* II.7.105. ¶ 36 FROM THENCE, i.e. away from home, cp. "And feedes from home" *Err.* II.1.101. MEATE in EL.E. had a sound like that of MN.E. 'mate,' and so there is no pun intended. CEREMONY, 'cer'mony,' the syn-copated form of the word. ¶ 37 REMEMBRANCER, 'prompter,' 'monitor,' cp. "remembrancer, *nomenclator memorialis, magister memoriarum, monitor*" Skinner, and "remembrancer, *een indachtig-maaker*" Sewell, 1708. ¶ 39 There is a deep pathos in Macbeth's toast — Health! —

though of course it is a mere formality. The entrance of Banquo's ghost is displaced in MN. editions and put after v.39; but it belongs where the FO. has it. Macbeth, recalled from his absent-mindedness, proposes the toast standing behind the vacant seat—Banquo's—which he had taken when coming down from the throne. Somewhat dazed, he notices at first only that the table is full, probably supposing that some newly arrived guest has taken his place while he was talking to the murderer at the door. The full table leads to his gracious remark about having all the nobility of Scotland at his banquet.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶ 40 HONOR, 'nobility,' cp. note to II. I. 26. ¶ 41 GRAC'D, 'accomplished,' cp. "After a well grac'd actor leaves the stage" Rich. 2 V. 2. 24. ¶ 42 WHO: the confusion of relative cases is common in EL. syntax. MAY I RATHER, 'I must rather,' cp. note on III. I. 122. CHALLENGE, 'find fault with,' a common EL. meaning of the word, see N. E. D. 2. ¶ 43 MISCHANCE, i.e. 'his misfortune in not being here'; but Macbeth's overwrought mind falls foul of an unlucky word. ¶ 44 Rosse refers to the colloquy between Macbeth and Banquo in the opening of Scene I of this act. PLEAS'T, 'may it please,' an EL. phrase preserving the M. E. subjunctive idiom.

## ACT III SCENE IV 46-58

MACBETH

The table's full.

LENOX

Heere is a place reserv'd, sir.

MACBETH

Where?

LENOX

Heere, my good lord. What is 't that moves your highnesse?

MACBETH

Which of you have done this?

LORDS

What, my good lord?

MACBETH

Thou canst not say I did it: never shake Thy goary lockes at me.

ROSSE

Gentlemen, rise; his highnesse is not well.

LADY MACBETH

Sit, worthy friends: my lord is often thus, And hath beene from his youth. Pray you, keepe seat;

The fit is momentary; upon a thought He will againe be well. If much you note him

You shall offend him and extend his passion; Feed, and regard him not.

¶ 46 Macbeth, seeing the table full, is turning again to his throne, or perhaps leaving the banquet-hall. Banquo's chair is still empty, of course, to the vision of all save Macbeth, and to him the ghostly occupant of it has his back turned. Rosse asks Macbeth not to leave their company and he naturally replies "the table's full." Lenox points out the place that has been kept for him: this place is to Macbeth's eyes occupied, and he naturally asks "Where?" At Lenox's "Heere, my good lord" Macbeth comes nearer and the ghost slowly turns his head, forbidding Macbeth to sit down. The first explanation that occurs to Macbeth is that he is the victim of trickery, that some one is personating Banquo. 'Angers' is a common EL. sense of MOVES. "Which of you have done this?" can hardly mean 'has murdered Banquo' because it is no corpse that

Macbeth is looking on. Then the ghost shakes its head to indicate a denial, hence Macbeth's "never shake thy goary lockes at me." ¶ 50 The stress is upon I, the reversal occurring after the cæsural pause made by SAY. ¶ 52 RISE, 'break up the meeting,' still used in this sense in the phrase 'the house rises.' ¶ 53 Lady Macbeth rushes down from her throne to explain that her husband is subject to these sudden seizures. LORD in M. E. and e. N. E. means 'husband'; cp. Desdemona's "My lord is not my lord" in Oth. III. 4. 124.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶ 55 UPON A THOUGHT, 'in a moment': 'upon' was frequently used in M.E. and e.N.E. temporal phrases; cp. "upon the moment" Compl. 248. ¶ 56 NOTE, 'pay attention to,' cp. "I'le re you, I'le fa you, do you note me?" Rom.&Jul. IV. 5. 121. ¶ 57 OFFEND probably has its EL. connotation of 'injure' as well as of 'give offence to.' EXTEND, i.e. aggravate. PASSION, 'dis-ease,' referring to insanity, cp. "But till this afternoone his passion [i.e. madness] Ne'er brake into extremity of rage" Err. V. 47. ¶ 58 FEED, cp. v. 35.

## ACT III SCENE IV 58-68

ASIDE TO MACBETH

Are you a man?

MACBETH

I, and a bold one, that dare looke on that  
Which might appall the divell.

LADY MACBETH

O proper stuffe!

This is the very painting of your feare:  
This is the ayre-drawne-dagger which you  
said

Led you to Duncan. O, these flawes and  
starts,

Impostors to true feare, would well become  
A woman's story at a winter's fire,  
Authoriz'd by her grandam. Shame it selfe!  
Why do you make such faces? When all's  
done,

You looke but on a stoole.

Lady Macbeth is, of course, now standing by her husband, so that her aside is natural; she appeals to him to recover his self-possession as she did before in I. 7. 35, and he answers as before. ¶ 60 APPALL carried with it in EL.E. the sense of 'make pale' as well as its modern meaning. PROPER, 'fine,' cp. "A proper title of a peace" Hen. 8. I. 98. STUFFE, 'rant,' cp. "At this fusty stuffe . . . Achilles . . . laughs" Tro. & Cr. I. 3. 161, and "such stuffe as madmen Tongue" Cym. V. 4. 146. ¶ 62 AYRE-DRAWNE, i.e. pictured in the air: this is one of those implications woven into a situation that are so common in Shakspeare;

nowhere in the previous action has Macbeth spoken to his wife about this dagger, but his words here suggest to the imagination a scene in which he has discussed the phenomenon with Lady Macbeth, and they exaggerate too the horror of the supernatural control under which Macbeth's deeds of evil are committed. ¶ 63 FLAWES, 'outbursts or accesses of passion,' cp. "this mad-bred flawe" 2 Hen. 6 III. 1. 354. York has just said, "You put sharpe weapons in a madman's hands." See also N.E.D. s.v., and its citation from Spenser, "She at the first encounter on him ran . . . But he . . . from that first flaw himself right well defended." STARTS: cp. "For she did speake in starts distractedly" Tw. N. II. 2. 22, and "Such unconstant starts are we like to have from him" Lear I. 1. 304. In "flawes and starts" there seems thus to be a reference to Macbeth's insanity. ¶ 64 IMPOSTORS: the idea of 'cheating' is more prominent in the EL. word than in MN.E.—see N.E.D.—and to the EL. mind the term suggested a mountebank. TO, 'compared to,' a common EL. meaning of the preposition. ¶ 65 Lady Macbeth refers to the 'eerie stories nurses tell'; that these "straunge and marvellous tales which they have heard of their grandmothers and mothers" were a popular recreation for a winter's eve in Shakspeare's time is shown by contemporary references cited in Drake, pp. 154 ff. The taunt in Lady Macbeth's words lies in their accusation that her husband is a child afraid of ghosts. ¶ 66 AUTHORIZ'D, 'vouched for as true,' N.E.D. 4; the word is stressed upon its second syllable in EL.E., cp. Minsheu, 1617, "to authórizē" (Minsheu marks primary stresses in many English



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

words); cp. also Sonnet XXXV.6 and Lover's Compl. 104. The *th* in the word represented *t* in EL.E. SHAME IT SELFE, from the pointing of FO.I, which has a comma after "it selfe," seems to be a strong exclamation of disgust provoked by a fresh access of Macbeth's madness.

¶ 68 STOOLE in EL.E. means 'chair' as well as what we now call a stool.

ACT III SCENE IV 69-74

MACBETH

Prythee, see there! behold! looke! Loe, how say you?

Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speake too!

If charnell houses and our graves must send Those that we bury backe, our monuments Shall be the mawes of kytes.

EXIT GHOST

LADY MACBETH

What, quite unmann'd in folly?

MACBETH

If I stand heere, I saw him.

LADY MACBETH

Fie, for shame!

It is quite possible that here the ghost of Duncan appears, or at least that Macbeth sees Duncan as he saw the air-drawn dagger. The mention of Duncan in v.63 would be the psychological moment for such an apparition. In FO.I two entrances are marked for the ghost, the words of the first entrance pointing to the ghost coming in on the stage while Macbeth is at the door, and not coming up through the floor as Davenant arranged it. Forman thus describes the play as he saw it in 1610: "The next night being at supper with his noble men whom he had bid to a feast, to the which also Banco [Forman spells the word in what was probably its English form, 'Banquho' being the Scottish orthography] should have com, he began to speake of noble Banco, and to wish he wer ther. And as he thus did, standing up to drinke a carouse to him, the ghoste of Banco came and sat down in his chaire behind him. And he turning about to sit down again, sawe the goste of Banco which fronted him so that he fell into a great passion of fear and fury, utteringe many wordes about his murder, by which when they hard that Banco was murthered, they suspected Machtet." In reading this description it is to be noted that Forman is writing from memory, and that he is only setting down 'moral conclusions' from the play—in this case the fact that murder will discover itself. Too much importance, therefore, must not be attached to his description: it is obviously imperfect in describing only the ghost in vv. 88 ff., saying nothing about its previous appearance. The utmost that we can infer from his failure to note the appearance of Duncan's ghost is that it was not actually visible to the audience. There seems to be a note of awe in Macbeth's reference here which is lacking in the other two cases, and the expression "those that we bury" is rather out of place applied to Banquo, who is "safe in a ditch" and not 'buried' or 'entombed.' The plural in v.80 points to the same interpretation. Perhaps, therefore, we are justified in assuming that vv. 69-73 refer to a vision of Duncan in Macbeth's mind even if Duncan's ghost does not actually make its appearance to the audience. If this be the case and vv. 68 ff. refer to Duncan, the 'Exit Ghost' which in modern editions is placed after v.73 belongs after v.52. If not, the various exclamations are uttered as Macbeth tries to make Lady Macbeth see the apparition of Banquo as it moves away from the table. ¶ 70 WHAT CARE I? i.e. for your nods and gestures. ¶ 71 CHARNELL HOUSES, i.e. the places where dead men's bones are kept. ¶ 72 MONUMENTS in EL.E. means 'tombs,' 'burying-vaults,' as well as the monuments erected over them; cp. "like a taper in some monument" Titus II.3.228. ¶ 73 SHALL

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

BE, 'will be,' i.e. will come to be. MAWES, 'stomachs': when Romeo opens the tomb he calls it "Thou detestable mawe, . . . Gorg'd with the dearest morsell of the earth, Thus I enforce thy rotten jawes to open, And in despite I'll cram thee with more food" Rom.&Jul. v.3.45. Harrison in his 'Description of England' II, p.45, says that the Caspians nourish mastiffs "to the end they should devoure their carcasses after their deaths, thinking the dogs bellies to be the most honourable sepulchres." Steevens cites 'Faerie Queene' II.8.16, "What herce or steede (said he) should he have dight But be entombed in the raven or the kight?" Delius points out the same figure in Kyd's Cornelia: "the vulture and the crows, Lyons and beares are their best Sepulchres." EXIT GHOST

is not found in FO.I; there is a similar omission of the EXIT GHOST in Cæs. IV. 3.287 (FO.I, p.127).

## ACT III SCENE IV 75-83

### MACBETH

Blood hath bene shed ere now, i' th' olden time,

Ere humane statute purg'd the gentle weale;  
I, and since too, murthers have bene perform'd

Too terrible for the eare. The times has bene  
That when the braines were out, the man  
would dye,

And there an end; but now they rise againe  
With twenty mortall murthers on their  
crownes,

And push us from our stooles. This is more  
strange

Then such a murther is.

¶76 HUMANE, 'human,' see note to I.5.18. Florioglosses *ragione humana* by "humane law" as distinguished from *ragione divina*, "divine law." PURGE was a general EL.E. term for 'remedy,' as disease was thought to be caused by the presence of bad humours that had to be purged from the body. GENTLE WEALE: "weale" is the e.N.E. form of a M.E. noun meaning 'well-being,' 'happiness,' the opposite of 'woe,' and still survives in 'for weal or woe'; "public weal," "common weal" are e.N.E. terms corresponding to MN.E. 'state,' and in some of their senses to MN.E. 'commonwealth,'

and "weale" alone frequently takes on in e.N.E. the meaning 'public weal.' It appears again in this sense in V.2.27 with the same attendant notion of purging as here. GENTLE is here usually understood to be proleptically used, the notion being that of the "weale" made gentle by purging. But the instances of prolepsis which grammarians find so frequent in Shakspeare are nearly all of them due to ignoring EL. word associations which make the assumption of this figure unnecessary, cp. note to I.6.3. Shakspeare frequently uses the term "gentle" as the opposite of "wild" and in the sense of 'tame,' 'cultivated'; "gentle weale" could therefore refer to the softening influences of civilization (cp. N.E.D. 3 c and 8) and the whole thought be 'before civilization devised human law as a means of purging itself of murderers.' Many editors of Shakspeare propose 'ungentle' or 'general' or 'golden' (*sic*) for "gentle." Macbeth's remark is interesting as being a note of heroic personality belonging to an age which had not yet curbed the strong passions of strong men: he frets under the checks and restraints that human law puts upon his violent impulses. ¶78 TERRIBLE, probably syncopated to "terr'ble." TIMES HAS is probably as Shakspeare wrote it, though the editors of FOS. 2, 3, and 4 make the verb plural to accord with later notions of English syntax. Modern editors change it to 'time has,' our modern idiom. TIMES in the plural, however, means 'manners,' 'customs' in EL.E. as well as in MN.E., which conveys quite a different notion from 'time' in the singular. ¶81

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

TWENTY is often an indefinite numeral in EL. E. like MN. E. 'dozen,' cp. 'for one injury done they provoke another *cum fœnore*, and twenty enemies for one' Burton, 'Anat. of Mel.' II.3.7. But clear reference seems here to be made to Banquo's head with its 'twenty gashes each a death to nature,' and to Banquo's pushing Macbeth from his chair.

## ACT III SCENE IV 83-92

LADY MACBETH

My worthy lord,  
Your noble friends do lacke you.

MACBETH

I do forget:  
Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends;  
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing  
To those that know me. Come, love and  
health to all;  
Then I'll sit downe. Give me some wine, fill  
full.

ENTER GHOST

I drinke to th' generall joy of the whole table,  
And to our deere friend Banquo, whom we  
misse;  
Would he were heere! to all, and him we  
thirst,  
And all to all!

LORDS

Our duties, and the pledge!

¶83 The fit is now past and Lady Macbeth recalls him to his duties. ¶84 LACKE YOU, 'notice your absence,' cp. "I shall be lov'd when I am lack'd" Cor. IV. I. 15. There is an extra syllable at the end of the first half verse. ¶85 MUSE, 'wonder,' cp. "I muse your majesty doth seeme so cold" John III. I. 317. The sentence stress seems to fall upon AT, cp. the rhythm of I.4.52. ¶89 OF THE WHOLE TABLE seems to be the rhythm, though FO. I prints "o'th" for OF THE. ¶90 OUR and WE are instances of the majestyplural. ¶91 THIRST seems to mean 'long for': the 'for,' which is essential to the verb in MN. E., did not always accompany it in EL. E., cp. citations in Cent. Dict. from Tyndale, "to thirst his true doctrine," and from Prior, "and thirsts hir blood"; cp. also "that unhappy king, my master, whom I so much thirst to see" Wint. T. IV. 4. 523. ¶92 AND ALL TO ALL: the first "all" is used in the sense of 'everything,' i.e. every good thing, cp. note to I.7.5; the words were evidently a customary form of pledge, cp. Timon's toast to the company, "All to you" Timon I.2.234.

The skill with which Shakspeare here represents the workings of Macbeth's mind is worthy of more than passing attention. In vv. 40 ff. a normal association, the full table, turns his thinking to the absent noble. Perfectly calm and quite master of himself, he seizes the occasion to point a reference to Banquo's unkindness in not having made a greater effort to be present, thus preparing, as he usually does, for the "consequence"—the suspicion that may fall on him when the news of Banquo's murder reaches the court. But he is reckoning with forces beyond his control, for his pointed reference leads naturally to the request from Rosse and Angus that he take Banquo's empty place and this dwelling upon the thought of Banquo brings on his fit again. The "flawe" sweeps away his outward calm and in a moment all is mad confusion. The wild storm of passion spends its first fury, but Lady Macbeth's unfortunate reference to Duncan brings on another immediately in its wake, to Macbeth worse than the first in its ruthless havoc,



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

as is shown by his reckless "Why, what care I?"—a scream of defiance as he screws his manly courage to the fight against his imagined enemy. And he succeeds in gaining at least sufficient self-control to reason about the phenomenon in vv. 41 ff. Slowly his harried mind rights itself, and when Lady Macbeth, taught by experience to avoid references like her former one, makes him realize his danger, he guides his thought again into calm waters. But unfortunately, as he resumes his normal thinking, his mind takes up again the train of ideas that was broken off by his access of 'passion'; and, like one passing out of delirium, he goes back to the last moment of sane thought to restore the continuity of his self-consciousness; his first wholly conscious act is to propose the health of the absent Banquo. This time it is not the accidental insistence of Rosse and Lenox that he should remain in their company, nor a tactless reference of Lady Macbeth's to the murdered Duncan, that precipitates the attack, but the normal and natural operations of his own mind as it strives to recover itself. The demons of his worser self—that self which he has given over to the powers of evil and which has now become strong enough to enslave him—have him again in their clutches. Thus "our deere friend Banquo, whom we misse" brings on the last and worst fit, from which he does not escape. Even when the banquet has broken up in confusion and alarm and he is alone with Lady Macbeth it still continues, down to the middle of v. 126. And then, at last, he awakes from his awful dream, one of those "terrible dreams" that have now invaded his strongest conscious moments to stalk through his noonday hours as well as to shake him nightly. And as he wakes he turns to Lady Macbeth with the world-old inquiry that follows a night of agony, "What time is it?"

The "Enter Ghost" of the FO. is by modern editors placed after v. 92; but the FO. probably represents what Shakspeare wrote, for it corresponds to the psychology of the play as well as to its action. For, as at v. 37, it is the thought of Banquo in Macbeth's

## ACT III SCENE IV 93-98

### MACBETH

Avant! and quit my sight! let the earth hide thee!

Thy bones are marrowlesse, thy blood is cold;  
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes  
Which thou dost glare with.

### LADY MACBETH

Thinke of this, good peeres,  
But as a thing of custome: 't is no other;  
Onely it spoyles the pleasure of the time.

mind that causes the ghost to appear, and as the thought is present in his mind before he utters the words of v. 40, so here the intention to drink Banquo's health is in Macbeth's mind when he says "fill full," though he couples it with a general pledge; and it is this thought of Banquo, not the words that express it, that causes his image to appear. It fits in with the action, also, for Macbeth has not yet sat down; he will sit down after the toast, and then, as before, the intention to take Banquo's place, which his ghost forbids, will, as it were, make the subjective notion objective and arouse anger. Shakspeare thus shows clearly that the ghost is a creation of Macbeth's own mind, unseen by the others. Yet modern editors destroy all this, and then argue as to whether the ghost was real or imaginary. ¶ 94 The MARROW in EL. psychology was thought of as the seat of nerve force. Vicary, in his 'Anatomie,' ed. 1577, calls the spinal cord the "spinal marrow," and the term is still in popular usage. Shakspeare frequently associates the word with nervous energy, cp. "my marrow burning" Ven. & Ad. 142, and "Spending his manlie marrow in her arms" All's W. II. 3. 298. Here the ghost is said to be without feeling—"dead life."

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

THY BLOOD IS COLD: 'cold-blooded' is still a phrase for 'passionless,' cp. "In whose cold blood no sparke of honor bides" 3Hen.6 I. I. 184. But in EL.E. it is scientific and not figurative language. ¶95 SPECULATION, 'power of vision,' illustrating an earlier and literal meaning of the word, viz., 'spying out'; Othello speaks of Cupid 'seeling his speculative instruments' in Oth. I. 3. 270; cp. "nor doth the eye it selfe . . behold it selfe Not going from it selfe . . For speculation turnes not to it selfe Till it hath travel'd and is married there Where it may see it selfe" Tro.&Cr. III. 3. 106 (cited by Delius), and "Dead life, blind sight, poore mortall living ghost" Rich. 3 IV. 4. 26. ¶97 OF CUSTOME, 'habitual,' cp. "Our dance of custome . . let us not forget" MerryW. V. 5. 79. NO OTHER is com-

mon M.E. and e.N.E. idiom corresponding to MN.E. 'nothing else.' ¶98 ONELY IT SPOYLES, 'it merely spoils'; for the position and meaning of "onely," cp. note to I. 4. 20.

¶99 As in v. 59 Macbeth protests his human courage. DARE is an old subjunctive, i.e. 'what any man may dare to do.' ¶100 RUGGED in EL.E. may mean 'shaggy,' cp. "His well proportion'd beard made ruffe and rugged" 2Hen.6 III. 2. 175; but the word also means 'fierce,' 'savage,' cp. "The rugged Pyrrhus like th' Hyrcanian beast" Ham. II. 2. 472. From TH'HIRCAN TIGER of the following verse it would seem that the latter meaning was intended here. RUSSIAN BEARE: Bear-baiting was a familiar sport to Shakspeare's

audience; cp. "Foolish cures [i.e. mastiffs used in bear-baiting] that runne winking into the mouth of a Russian beare, and have their heads crusht like rotten apples" Hen.5 III. 7. 153. ¶101 ARM'D: Shakspeare's epithet is explained by a passage from Purchas's Pilgrimage, vol. V, p. 472: "The skinne upon the upper part of this beast [i.e. the "Rhincorote"] is all wrinkled as if he were armed with shields." HYRCAN occurs side by side with Hyrcanian in EL.E. Shakspeare has the latter form in Ham. II. 2. 472, and "The Hircanian deserts," i.e. the country south of the Caspian Sea, are referred to in Merch. II. 7. 41. The form "Hyrcan" occurs in Daniel's Sonnets, 1594: "To Hyrcan tigers and to ruthless beares"; also in Holland's Pliny. The fierceness of the Hyrcanian tiger, proverbial in EL. literature, is probably traceable to Vergil's *Æneis*, IV. 367 ff., where Dido speaks of her lover's cruelty: Marlowe translates the line, 'And tigers of Hyrcania gave thee suck' The Tragedy of Dido, Act V. ¶102 NERVES, 'sinews,' a common EL. meaning of the word; cp. "Thy nerves are in their infancy againe" Temp. I. 2. 484. ¶104 DARE ME TO THE DESART: Shakspeare elsewhere twice makes use of this romantic form of defiance, in Rich. 2 I. I. 62 and *ibid.* IV. I. 74. ¶105 INHABIT THEN: the words have given much difficulty; "inhabit" is often used absolutely in EL.E. in the sense of 'dwell,' e.g. "the Ammonites inhabited northward" Purchas's Pilgrimage, vol. V, p. 97, but the word is usually accompanied by some definition of place as in "so eating love Inhabits in the finest wits of all" Two Gent. I. I. 43. It may be, therefore, that THEN is a misprint for 'there,' as Delius thought. The phrase with this correction would

## ACT III

## SCENE IV

99-108

### MACBETH

What man dare, I dare:

Approach thou like the rugged Russian beare,  
The arm'd rhinoceros, or th' Hircan tiger;  
Take any shape but that, and my firme nerves  
Shall never tremble. Or be alive againe,  
And dare me to the desart with thy sword;  
If trembling I inhabit then, protest mee  
The baby of a girle. Hence, horrible shadow!  
Unreall mock'ry, hence!

EXIT GHOST

Why, so: being gone,  
I am a man againe. Pray you, sit still.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

mean 'If I tremble while I wait for you there,' and would make excellent sense. But Milton in *Paradise Lost* VII. 162 ff. has the same idiom as appears in the FO.: "Mean while inhabit laxe, ye Powers of Heav'n, And thou, my Word, begotten son, by thee This I perform, speak thou and be it don" (cited by Henley). In this passage "inhabit" is clearly used in the sense of 'remain,' 'keep,' 'stay': so that Macbeth's words, if Milton's usage is here *norma loquendi*, may mean 'If I keep trembling then, etc.' Iachimo's phrase, "I lodge in feare" *Cym.* II.2.49, gives color to this interpretation, for his 'in feare' is obviously not a locative but a modal qualification of the 'dwelling' notion. It has been suggested that "inhabit" may be a by-form of 'enhabit,' but as far as the quotations of the N.E.D. show, 'enhabit' has no meaning in EL.E. that fits the context. Many absurd emendations have been proposed to botch the passage into modern idiom; but, as is usually the case, their presence in the text of Shakspeare would be more difficult to explain than the phrase which they would supplant, for they not only betray a palpable inferiority of diction, but most of them would be sheer nonsense in the English of any period. The use of TREMBLING where MN.E. usage prefers 'in trembling' is paralleled in "with the very noise I trembling waked" *Rich.* 3 I.4.60. PROTEST, 'make public declaration of,' 'proclaim,' an early meaning of the word, cp. "I will protest your cowardise" *Ado* V.1.149. ¶ 106 BABY, 'doll,' N.E.D. 2, cp. "toying with babies" Marston's *Scourge of Villainy*, VIII.207, "A baby or puppet that children play with, *pupus*" *Phr. Gen.*, and *muñeco de niños*, a *babie*, a puppet for children" Percival's *Spanish Dict.* "Puppet" was a common epithet of opprobrium in EL.E., still retained in 'cowardly puppy,' and the two forms, 'puppet' and 'puppy,' seem to have been equivalent in e.N.E., cp. "*Pupus autem*, a babe or baby or a puppet . . . *anglice* puppy, *dicitur quasi parvus puer*" *Phr. Gen.* Some have taken the phrase to mean 'the child of a very young mother,' but without a specific qualification like 'green' or 'young' "girl" would not necessarily mean a very young mother in EL.E. ¶ 107

## ACT III SCENE IV 109-116

### LADY MACBETH

You have displac'd the mirth, broke the good meeting

With most admir'd disorder.

### MACBETH

Can such things be,  
And overcome us like a summer's clowd,  
Without our speciall wonder? You make me strange

Even to the disposition that I owe,  
When now I thinke you can behold such sights,

And keepe the naturall rubie of your cheekes,  
When mine is blanch'd with feare.

banket, but wee'l mend it. A good digestion to you all." For the form of the word see note to I.4.3. ¶ 110 ADMIR'D, 'astonishing,' 'amazing,' from 'admire,' 'to be amazed'; as in "undaunted" I.7.73, the -ed suffix has its EL. causative force. ¶ 111 That is, 'and

young mother in EL.E. ¶ 107 MOCK'RY, 'imitation,' 'counterfeit,' cp. "Minding true things by what their mock'ries be" *Hen.* 5 IV. Prol. 53.

¶ 109 DISPLAC'D, 'banished,' a frequent meaning of the word in EL.E.: see N.E.D. I b. THE would be 'our' in MN.E. BROKE, 'broken up': in N.E.D. 2 f the earliest citation for the word in this sense is dated 1685, and its phraseological limitation is 'to break (i.e. dissolve) parliament,' and 'to break (i.e. disband) a regiment'; but the sense of 'breaking up a company' is clearly in the word as it is used here and in *Hen.* 8 I.4.61, where Wolsey puns after the Chamberlain and his attendants leave the table: "You have now a broken



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

yet only pass over us like a summer's cloud.' OVERCOME in EL. E. still retained enough of its literal signification of 'come over,' 'pass over,' 'cover,' to make Macbeth's simile of the oppression of a summer thunder-cloud clear to Shakspeare's audience; cp. "his eyes were overcome with fervor" Chapman, *Iliad* XV (cited in Cent. Dict.). The same figure occurs in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, III. 7. 4: "A little valley subject to the same [*i.e.* lying on the hillside] All covered with thicke woodes that quite it overcame" (cited in part by Farmer): so in Titus II. 3. 94: "The trees . . . Orecome with mosse and balefull mis-sleto." Macbeth seizes on the 'wonder' notion in Lady Macbeth's "admir'd disorder" and philosophizes upon it. In ¶ 112 he turns and speaks directly to her. STRANGE TO, 'unacquainted with,' 'unfamiliar with,' cp. "To put a strange face on his owne perfection" *Ado* II. 3. 49. ¶ 113 DISPOSITION often occurs in EL. E. where MN. E. employs 'character.' It was also used to denote 'health of mind,' see N. E. D. 10 b. OWE, 'possess,' as in I. 4. 10. Much the same notion occurs in *Rom. & Jul.* III. 3. 109 ff., where Friar Laurence addresses the furious Romeo with the words

"Art thou a man? thy forme cries out thou art: Thy teares are womanish, thy wild acts denote The unreasonable furie of a beast. Unseemely woman in a seeming man, And ill beseeming beast in seeming both, Thou hast amaz'd me. By my holy order, I thought thy disposition better temper'd." ¶ 116 MINE, *i.e.* my cheeks; it is common EL. syntax thus to make a pronoun stand for a word that is to be supplied from the context. But in attempting to construe the passage as MN. E. many editors change IS to 'are,' and Cl. Pr. makes "mine" stand for RUBIE.

## ACT III SCENE IV 116-121

ROSSE

What sights, my lord?

LADY MACBETH

I pray you, speake not; he growes worse and worse;

Question enrages him: at once, good night.

Stand not upon the order of your going,

But go at once.

LENOX

Good night, and better health

Attend his Majesty!

LADY MACBETH

A kinde good night to all!

EXEUNT LORDS

¶ 116 Rosse has caught the word SIGHTS, 'visions,' from Macbeth's somewhat excited protest to his wife. ¶ 118 QUESTION, 'discussion,' cp. I. 3. 43; AT ONCE, 'without more ado.' ¶ 119 STAND NOT, 'attach no importance to,' cp. "we stand upon our manners" *Wint. T.* IV. 4. 164. The phrase has become stereotyped in MN. E., and is often absurdly used where only one person is concerned.

In the passage that follows Macbeth, still in the "fit" and absorbed in his thoughts about the ghost, pays no attention to the breaking up of the company, but continues to ponder on the meaning of the "strange sight." ¶ 122 He quotes a current popular superstition, cp. "Blood will have blood, so ever mought it be" Peele, *'Tale of Troy'* 321. The Cambridge Text alters the punctuation of the FO., placing a colon after BLOOD and a comma after SAY. But the proverb first occurs to Macbeth vaguely, 'they say it [*i.e.* a ghost] will haunt one until it is revenged, and will have blood expiation.' Then the exact words of the proverb chant their ominous refrain through his mind. "Blood will have blood," *i.e.* a deed of murder (N. E. D. 3 c) will not be satisfied short of an expiation by blood-shedding (N. E. D. 3 b). To alter the punctuation not only flattens out the

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

sense, but weakens the rhythm, "x x ' x" || ' ' ' ' being much more effective than "x x ' || ' ' || ' ' ' '. ¶ 123 ff. Shakspeare was perhaps thinking of the tree which revealed the murder of Polydorus in Vergil's *Æneis*, III.22.59, as Steevens suggests; he may also have had in mind the story told in Montaigne's *Essays*, II.5 of Bessus the Pœnian, which was "so common that even children have it in their mouths": how Bessus, "being found fault withall, that in mirth he had beaten downe a nest of young sparrows and then killed them, answered he had great reason to doe it; for so much as those young birds ceased not falsely to accuse him to have murdered his father, which parricide was never suspected to have beene committed by him, and untill that day had layen secret." ¶ 124 AUGURES, i.e. divination, especially from the flight or chirping of birds, see N.E.D. s.v. and its citations: "To lerne and know by augures and divinacions of

## ACT III SCENE IV 122-127

### MACBETH

It will have blood, they say: 'Blood will have blood':

Stones have beene knowne to move and trees to speake;

Augures and understood relations have

By maggot pyes and choughes and rookes brought forth

The secret'st man of blood. What is the night?

### LADY MACBETH

Almost at oddes with morning, which is which.

briddis" Book of Noblesse, 1475; "a good augur or foreboding of a martiall minde" Florio's Montaigne, 1603. The word is an EL. by-form of 'augury' (cp. O.FR. *augure*). RELATIONS, 'utterances,' here of birds, as in the story of Bessus; a somewhat forced interpretation of 'secret relations between things' (Schmidt, following Johnson) has been put upon the phrase. ¶ 125 MAGGOT PYES, the EL. form of 'magpie.' CHOUGHES was a popular name applied somewhat widely to all the smaller chattering species of birds, but especially to the common jackdaw, see N.E.D. 4. Shakspeare again refers to the bird in Mids.III.2.21. N.E.D. has a citation from Wilkinson, 1620, which groups together "Crowes, rookes, choghes, pyes, jeyes, ringdoves." BROUGHT FORTH, 'discovered,' 'brought to light,' a common meaning of the word in Shakspeare; see N.E.D. 16 d. ¶ 126 SECRET'ST: for the form of the word see note to I.5.3; for the meaning cp. "in this city will I stay And live alone as secret as I may" 2Hen.6 IV.4.47. WHAT IS THE NIGHT? seems to be formed on the analogy of 'What is the time?' i.e. How goes the time? In M.E. and e.N.E. WHAT is frequently used in idiom that requires 'how' in MN.E. The sudden awakening of Macbeth to a sense of his surroundings as he emerges from his delirium with the question 'What time is it?' is a wonderfully dramatic touch of human interest. ¶ 127 ALMOST AT ODDES, i.e. on the point of quarrelling, cp. "I do not know that Englishman alive With whom my soule is any jot at oddes" Rich.3 II.1.69.

Again, as normal consciousness returns to him, Macbeth's mind takes up its interrupted activities, the interval of unconscious action being a blank to him. He says to himself, Not only was Banquo absent from the table, but Macduff also. What does Macduff's absence mean? Then, turning to Lady Macbeth, he puts the question in v. 128, 'What do you think of this absence of Macduff's?' The new train of "consequence" that will precipitate Macbeth's doom is thus artfully joined without a break on to the old. The menace of Banquo's being and the rebuke of Banquo's genius are no sooner disposed of than Macduff begins to threaten Macbeth's peace and provide fresh work for Ruin,

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

Macbeth's royal 'champion to the utterance.' Thus is the æsthetic continuity of this rapid tragedy maintained, event involving event in continuous series, but all so wrought together as to present a single picture. To secure this end Shakspeare, as usual, departs from Holinshed's account. There it is the building of Macbeth's castle of Dunsinane that provokes Macduff's surly 'denial of his person' to Macbeth: "Macbeth being once determined to have the worke go forward, caused the thanes of each shire within the realme to come and helpe towards that building, each man his course about." When Macduff's turn comes he sends his quota of material and his contingent of workmen, but refuses to come himself, and his refusal is the cause of offence to Macbeth.

## ACT III

## SCENE IV

128-140

¶ 128 HOW SAY'ST THOU  
THAT MACDUFF DENIES?

'What do you say to Macduff's refusal?' cp. "Launce, how saiest thou that my master is become a notable lover?" Two Gent. II. 5. 42. Though there is no comma after THOU in FO. I, modern editors, including the Cambridge Text, insert one, making nonsense of the passage. The expression in EL. E. is not exclamatory but interrogative: "How [in e. N. E.] is sometimes used interrogatively for what," as Phr. Gen. says, illustrating by "how (i.e. what) think you? *Quid tibi viditur*." "How mean you?" is another common e. N. E. idiom of this sort. DENIES HIS PERSON, 'refuses his presence': the common MN. E. phrase 'in person' contains the word in this early sense; cp. "I'll . . . tender your persons to his presence" Wint. T. IV. 4. 826. ¶ 129 GREAT is still used in MN. E.

in some phrases, like 'great house,' 'great family,' with the meaning 'noble,' 'pertaining to persons of high rank or office,' but "great bidding" would not now mean 'royal command,' as it evidently did in Shakspeare's time; cp. "great command [i.e. royal authority] o're-swaies the order" Ham. V. I. 251. BIDDING, 'command,' not 'invitation'—a king commands his guests; the latter sense of the word is not older than the nineteenth century; cp. "the thunder would not peace at my bidding" Lear IV. 6. 103. Lady Macbeth's counter-question, 'Did you send a special messenger to invite him?' illustrates the EL. absolute usage of SEND in the sense of 'send a messenger.' It occurs again in "Seyton, send out" V. 3. 49. TO HIM is probably intended to be contracted,—see note to I. 3. 119,—with SIR (the usual EL. form of address to a sovereign, corresponding to the French 'Sire') a stressed impulse. There is nothing remarkable in Lady Macbeth's

MACBETH

How say'st thou that Macduff denies his  
person

At our great bidding?

LADY MACBETH

Did you send to him, sir?

MACBETH

I heare it by the way, but I will send:  
There's not a one of them but in his house  
I keepe a servant fee'd. I will to morrow,  
And betimes I will, to the weyard sisters.  
More shall they speake, for now I am bent  
to know

By the worst meanes the worst. For mine  
owne good

All causes shall give way. I am in blood  
Stept in so farre that, should I wade no more,  
Returning were as tedious as go ore:  
Strange things I have in head that will to  
hand,

Which must be acted ere they may be scan'd.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

thus addressing her husband: quite misunderstanding the EL. use of "send," and exaggerating the significance of Lady Macbeth's "Sir," critics comment upon a supposed change in Lady Macbeth's character: 'She now addresses him in the humbled tone of an inferior; we now see fright and astonishment seated on her face.' Macbeth would hardly have asked his wife what she thought of Macduff's sulkiness if this had been her relation to him. ¶ 130 The EL. phrase BY THE WAY is slightly different from MN.E. 'by the way,' and is tantamount to 'incidentally'; cp. Cotgrave's "*en passant*, accidentally, by the way." ¶ 131 Holinshed notices this system of back-stairs espionage which Macbeth practised on his nobles. A ONE: many modern editors, unfamiliar with the EL. usage of ONE in the sense of 'person,' have subjected the phrase to such emendations as 'not a man,' 'not a thane,' in order to prevent Shakspeare from being 'guilty' of faulty locution; but cp. the quotation from Golding in the note to I.7.47. ¶ 132 I WILL, i.e. I will go, the usual EL. omission of the verb of motion. ¶ 133 The verse seems to lack an unstressed syllable. If TO THE is not contracted into "to th'," WEYARD is to be read as a monosyllable; the former scansion is preferable, but perhaps the verse is not authentic. ¶ 134 TO KNOW: MN.E. uses the phrase 'on knowing.' ¶ 135 GOOD has here its EL. sense of 'advantage'; the stress mine owne góod is different from that of the MN.E. phrase. ¶ 136 CAUSES, 'matters of dispute' and so 'interests,' cp. "The extreme parts of time extreme-lie formes All causes to the purpose of his speed" L.L.L. V.2.750. In EL.E. the *u* in BLOOD had not yet developed to *a*, so that the word was a perfect rhyme to "good." ¶ 137 STEPT IN: a similar notion occurs in "a friend of mine, who in hot blood Hath stept into the law, which is past depth To those that without heede do plundge intoo 't" Timon III. 5.11; cp. also "But I am in So farre in blood that sinne will pluck on sinne" Rich.3 IV. 2.64. The repetition of the preposition in such phrases is common EL. syntax. MORE, 'farther,' a frequent e.N.E. sense of the word, cp. "And yet we ascended mor and came to the place wher ower Savyor Crist . . wepte" Tarkington, cited in Cent. Dict. ¶ 138 GO: the infinitive without "to" was frequently employed in EL.E. where MN.E. requires the prepositional form; it here corresponds to the MN.E. present participle in -ing. ¶ 139 IN HEAD, 'in mind,' cp. "'T is in my head to doe my master good" Tam. of Shr. II.1.408; "head" in EL.E. frequently means 'mind' as here; this usage is preserved in MN. phrases like 'out of one's head,' and in the MN. colloquial usage of 'head' in the sense of 'mental power.' WILL TO HAND, i.e. will come to hand. ¶ 140 ACTED, 'carried into execution,' a common EL. meaning of the verb, cp. "thou wast a spirit too delicate To act her earthy and abhord commands" Temp. I.2.272. SCANN'D is a somewhat stronger word in EL.E. than in MN.E., and here means 'carefully considered,' 'judged,' cp. "that would be scann'd" Ham. III.3.75.

## ACT III SCENE IV 141-144

### LADY MACBETH

You lacke the season of all natures, sleepe.

### MACBETH

Come, wee 'l to sleepe. My strange and self-abuse

Is the initiate feare that wants hard use:

We are yet but yong in deed.

EXEUNT

Macbeth's resolution is to push on with increased energy through his bloody course, the sooner to reach the end of it and attain his 'peace'; then he 'will tell pale-hearted fear it lies, and sleep in spite of thunder.'

Lady Macbeth reads his thought, and with marvellous skill turns it to her practical purpose of getting him to bed.

¶ 141 SEASON, 'seasoning,' 'that which preserves from

decay,' cp. "And good men like the sea should still maintain Their noble taste in midst of all fresh humours . . Bearing no season, much lesse salt of goodnesse" Ben Jonson, 'Cynthia's

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

Revells' V. I (cited in Cent. Dict.). NATURES, 'forms of life,' cp. note to I. 7. 68. Shakspeare expresses the same notion in Lear IV. 4. 12: "our foster nurse of nature is repose, The which he lacks"; Boorde, likewise, in his *Dietary*, E. E. T. S., p. 244, says, "It [i.e. sleep] doth restore nature," i.e. makes life fresh again when it has lost its savour. ¶ 142 STRANGE AND SELF-ABUSE, i.e. my strange delusion: Delius long ago called attention to the fact that "self-abuse" is an EL. syntactical compound of 'self' and 'abuse' in its common EL. sense of 'deception' referred to in the note on II. I. 50, and not our MN.E. compound word 'self-abuse'; "self-" is treated like an adjective, hence the AND. ¶ 143 INITIATE FEARE, i.e. the fear of the novice: perfect participles of polysyllabic verbs in -d in M.E. and e.N.E. often took no suffix. Shakspeare uses this form as an adjective, Macbeth's notion being that of a raw recruit or 'fresh-water soldier' whose fear wants hard usage, cp. "when we in our viciousnesse grow hard (Oh misery on 't!), the wise Gods seele our eyes" Ant.&Cl. III. 13. 111. He adds 'We are but young in action,' see N.E.D. 'deed' 5 b. FO. I prints "indeed," but this seems to be a printer's error.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SCENE V

There is good reason to conclude that this scene is a later addition to Macbeth, designed to furnish more of that spectacular interest which, as we know from contemporary accounts, was a popular accompaniment of early representations of the play. Its witches are quite unlike those of the earlier scenes. Hitherto the instruments of darkness have been akin to those mysterious creatures of the elder world with which the Germanic imagination peopled the moors and fens of northern Europe. They have little in common with classical demonology. Fates and Furies at once, like Grendel, 'they will work mischief until the end cometh,' and no one to hinder. It is their fatal power that makes them terrible and invests them with the mysterious awfulness of a predestinated doom—a seductive terror which has always appealed strongly to the Northern imagination. Engendered of the mist and fog, they are awful from their very vagueness and formlessness. They are nameless horrors haunting the by-paths of moral conduct, lying in wait for him who will entertain evil purposes. One must ever be on his guard that he be not unwittingly trapped into their clutches. One must shut his ears and flee from them: Macbeth listens and stands irresolute, and his irresolution costs him the loss of his soul. In the persons of witches they work the petty tragedies of village life, drowning sailors, blighting corn, blasting cattle; but their chief business is the seduction of human souls.

As Shakspeare has presented them in the previous scenes, they are a mysterious trinity of mischief-makers who come and are gone, swirling through the action of the play like formless wraiths. But in this scene they are fixed and sharply drawn according to the classic notions of mediæval demonology. Hecate is their queen, and with all the offended dignity of a peevish schoolmistress she chides their recreancy for 'trading and trafficking with Macbeth in riddles and affairs of death'; and, having learned their lesson in good manners, they are to meet their dame at the pit of Acheron. They are like the artificial creations of Jonson's *Masque of Queenes* or of Middleton's *Witch*, not like Shakspeare's embodiment of a mystery-loving Germanic folk-lore.

And their relation to Macbeth is different from what it was before. Hitherto it has been the fatal meeting of Macbeth's evil ambition and their evil purposes that brings them into his life. He does not seek them; they cross his path. His bargain with them is a tacit one, and he hopes to escape from his share in the fulfilment of it by ignoring its existence. He thinks himself strong enough to use these supernatural powers, and when he has gained his end to cast them aside. His "I will to the weyard sisters" in III. 4. 132 ff. sounds like Middleton rather than Shakspeare, cp. 'The Witch' I. 1 where Almachildes says, "I am a little headstrong and so Are most of the company. I will to the witches;

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

They say they have charms and tricks, etc." The whole setting of Scene I of Act IV, too, implies a chance meeting like that of I.3. If Macbeth has sought them out in their cave, why is Lenox in Scene I of Act IV? It is not unlikely, therefore, that these two verses are part of the machinery that introduces Scene V, and that as originally conceived the passage ran:

"There's not a one of them but in his house  
I keep a servent feed: I am bent to know  
By the worst means, the worst, etc.";

that Macbeth does not tell Lady Macbeth that he "will to the weyard sisters"; and that he has only a vague purpose in his mind whose presence is sufficient to bring about another meeting with the sisters, apparently accidental, but really fatally ordained. When he meets them in IV. I.48 his words are an expression of surprise, "What is't you do?" They 'harp his fear aright,' and without his asking them they cry "Beware Macduff!" The witches' words in IV. I.61 likewise suggest an accidental meeting rather than a meeting by appointment with the king.

Again, how is it possible for any one who has followed the action intelligently up to this point to conceive of the witch dame's calling Macbeth 'a wayward son, spiteful and wrathful'? (See the note on the passage.)

And not only does the treatment of the subject-matter violate the organic unity of the play, the style and verse structure also are quite unlike Shakspeare's. The words lack the richness of association which characterizes Shakspeare's English: Hecate is "mistris of their charmes," "close contriver of all harmes," what they "have done hath bene but for a wayward sonne, Spightfull and wrathfull, who . . . Loves for his owne ends, not for you." "Thither he Will come to know his destinie"—these and other such forms of expression in the scene lack those dramatic and intimate associations drawn from actual life that distinguish Shakspeare's writing from that of his contemporaries. The artificial divisions of the thought to make the rhymes fit into their proper places, and the consequent padding out of the idea to fill the measure, like "Your vessels and your spels provide, Your charmes, and every thing beside," or "who, as others do, Loves for his owne ends, not for you," are not at all in Shakspeare's style. The verse form, four-wave rising rhythm rhymed in couplets, is one that Shakspeare, with his instinctive appreciation of the fitness of a falling rhythm for such subjects, does not use in treating supernatural interests. For such subjects he employs an inimitably capricious falling rhythm, full of starts and turns, made up usually of two phrases, as in "On the ground Sleepe sound, I'le apply To your eie, Gentle lover remedy" (Mids. III.2.448), or "Double, double, toile and trouble: Fire burne and cauldron bubble," or "Sleepe shall neyther night nor day Hang upon his pent-house lid," all of which are essential variations of the same rhythm theme. But "I am for th'ayre: this night I'le spend Unto a dismall and a fatall end" is built upon an entirely different theme, and is a form of rhythm that Shakspeare does not use in continuous verse. This rhythm lacks, too, that lyric quality which the certainty of stress incidence gives. Such verses as "Have I not reason, beldams as you are," or "And, which is worse, all you have done," or "And you all know security Is mortals' cheefest enemy" are in narrative and not in lyric rhythm. The abrupt ending of the verse on monosyllabic words, which by its staccato effect gives Shakspeare's witch rhythm its eerie music, is lacking in "Will come to know his destinie," "As by the strength of their illusion Shall draw him on to his confusion," and "And you all know security Is mortals' cheefest enemy," where the final stresses fall on secondary syllables,—to say nothing of the inappropriateness of such a platitude as this last in lyric poetry, for men do not sing philosophy, nor would Shakspeare have been likely to finish a lyric strain with a commonplace of classic literature, *neminem celerius opprimi quam qui nihil timeret*, even did he know it in Ben Jonson's version: "Be not secure: non swiflyer are opprest Than they whom confidence betrays to rest" Sejanus II.2.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

In view, then, of the awkwardness of this scene, its palpable violation of the theme interest of the tragedy, its artificial structure, and its unShaksperian style, one need have little fear that in repudiating it he is in danger of lessening Shakspeare's credit or of doing violence to the principles of sound literary criticism.

The question arises: Who interpolated these and the other obvious patchwork pieces into Macbeth? Many considerations point to Middleton as being responsible for them. In his *Witch* he makes use of the same conceptions of Hecate and her crew that are found in this scene, and in this play is found the notion of witches having lovers, see note to III. 5. 10; in his *Trick to Catch an Old One*, Scene II of Act V, as well as in parts of his *Witch*, he makes continuous use of the verse form we have in this scene; throughout the *Witch* are scattered palpable imitations of Macbeth; and in it occur in full the two songs that the stage directions (vv. 33 and 35) call for. The *Witch* was written some time before Middleton's death, for he speaks in his preface of 'having recovered into his hands, after much difficulty, this ignorantly ill fated labour' of his, which can only mean that the play had been unsuccessfully put upon the stage some years before he wrote it out for Thomas Holmes, Esq. A passage from this play occurs in Davenant's version and expansion of Macbeth, and it is not unlikely that Middleton and not Davenant is responsible for much of the padding out which appears in Davenant's version. But the whole question has not yet been sufficiently investigated for us to pronounce with any degree of certainty whether or not Middleton is responsible for the few obvious additions in Shakspeare's Macbeth as printed in the Folio of 1623, and still less with any degree of probability that Davenant made use of a version of Macbeth by Middleton, which was cut down to the presumably Shaksperian matter by the editors of the Folio. The play is complete as it stands, and, when clearly understood, possesses the peculiar organic unity so characteristic of Shakspeare. We may therefore conclude that even if there was a fuller form of it current on the stage, it was there only to make Macbeth longer and more entertaining, and that the editors of the Folio did wisely in excising it to its present dimensions.

## SCENE V: A HEATH: THUNDER

### ENTER THE THREE WITCHES MEETING HECAT

I-5

¶1 For the form HECAT † and the place of Hecate in EL. demonology, cp. note to II. I. 52. ANGERLY is an EL. by-form of the adverb that appears side by side with 'angrily': see N. E. D. and cp. "angrily (in look), *torvé*" Holyoke, 1677. The word occurs in John IV. I. 82, "Nor looke upon the iron angerly."

¶2 For the notion of the witch dame's holding her sub-

ordinates to account, cp. note to I. 3. I. BELDAMS AS YOU ARE, i.e. you hags; the word "beldam" originally meant 'grandmother' or 'old woman'; but in the sixteenth century it gained the depreciative sense of 'virago,' 'hag.' For "as you are" in such expressions as this, MN. E. prefers 'that you are'; cp. "coward as thou art" Rich. 3 I. 4. 286. In e. N. E.



#### FIRST WITCH

HY, how now, Hecat, you looke angerly?

#### HECAT

Have I not reason, beldams as you are?

Sawcy and over-bold, how did you dare  
To trade and trafficke with Macbeth  
In riddles and affaires of death;

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

ARE had a literary form sounded like the 'air' that is often heard in MN. dialects, so that the rhyme 'are : dare' is a perfect one. MN. editors generally depart from the FO. printing, placing a comma after ARE and an interrogation-point after OVER-BOLD, beginning a new sentence with HOW. But there is no ground for this; indeed, as is usually the case, the departure weakens the sense, for Hecate means that the witches are saucy and overbold in trading and trafficking with Macbeth: cp. the similar departure from the FO. in II.4.27. It is needless to say that Shakspeare has not represented Macbeth as "trading and trafficking" with the witches. The very essence of the tragedy lies in the fact that

## ACT III

## SCENE V

6-25

And I, the mistris of your charmes,  
The close contriver of all harmes,  
Was never call'd to beare my part,  
Or shew the glory of our art?  
And, which is worse, all you have done  
Hath bene but for a wayward sonne,  
Spightfull and wrathfull; who, as others do,  
Loves for his owne ends, not for you.  
But make amends now: get you gon,  
And at the pit of Acheron  
Meete me i' th' morning: thither he  
Will come to know his destinie:  
Your vessels and your spels provide,  
Your charmes, and every thing beside.  
I am for th' ayre; this night I'll spend  
Unto a dismall and a fatall end.  
Great businesse must be wrought ere noone:  
Upon the corner of the moone  
There hang's a vap'rous drop profound;  
I'll catch it ere it come to ground:

Macbeth's ambition and the purposes of the powers of evil come together fatally, not through Macbeth's seeking.

¶ 7 CLOSE, 'secret,' a common EL. meaning of the word.

¶ 9 OUR ART: it is not "art" but 'nature' that characterizes the workings of Shakspeare's wayward sisters. ¶ 10 ff.

WHICH IS WORSE is a common EL. E. idiom corresponding to MN. E. 'what is worse.' The lines really belong in Middleton's *Witch*, where the disgusting theme of sexual love between witches and young men is treated *ad nauseam*. With his usual moral healthfulness and good sense, Shakspeare avoids such noisome themes. ¶ 15 The glaring inconsistency of THE PIT OF ACHERON is explained by modern editors on the assumption that Shakspeare meant his audience to understand by "Acheron" some foul tarn in the neighbourhood! The phrase seems to be, not a reference to the river Acheron of the lower

world, but to the EL. notion of Acherusia; cp. Cooper's *Thesaurus*: "Acherusia . . is also a poole or mere of Thesportia [*sic* for Thesprotia] in Epyre, out of which issueth the ryver Acheron. . . Acherusia is also a hole or cave which the poets suppose to be a way into hell." ¶ 21 DISMALL, 'calamitous,' 'disastrous,' cp. note to I.2.53. ¶ 22 BUSINESSE may be a plural form like "riches," "largesse," cp. note to II.1.14; the word had an inflectionless plural in EL. E., e.g. "during all these great businesse" Browne, '*Polex*' (1647) I.66, as cited in N.E.D. s.v. 15. So the sense of this passage may be 'important tasks,' cp. note to II.1.48. But "businesse" also means 'disturbance,' 'commotion' in EL. E., cp. note to II.3.86. ¶ 23 That CORNER OF THE MOONE is not an unusual poetical expression, imitated by Milton in his "To the corners of the moon," as it has been explained to be, but a common EL. idiom for the 'horn of the moon,' is shown by Cooper's translation of Ovid's "*cornua lunaria*" by "the poyns or corners of the moone."

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶ 24 Steevens's inference that VAP'ROUS DROP is a reference to the *virus lunare* of mediæval demonology, mentioned in Lucan's *Pharsalia*, VI, is probably correct. For though this phrase has commonly a different meaning in EL.E. (see Cooper s.v. *virus lunare*), Thomas May, 1627, renders the Lucan passage "*virus large lunare ministrat*," by "of the moones poysonous gelly store she takes." PROFOUND seems to be used here in its sense 'of deep significance,' with perhaps a reminiscence of the Latin *profundo*, 'poured forth.'

## ACT III SCENE V 26-36

¶ 26 SLIGHTS, 'arts,' 'contrivances,' a meaning still preserved in MN.E. 'sleight of hand.' ¶ 27 ARTIFICIALL, 'cunning,' shading into 'deceitful,' a meaning that has gone over to 'artful,' cp. "thy prosperous and artificial fate [i.e. feat]" Per. V. I. 72. SPRIGHTS, the common EL. contracted form of 'spirits'; see note to I. 5. 41. ¶ 29 CONFUSION, 'ruin'; see the note to II. 3. 71. ¶ 30 Macbeth does not "spurne fate" until the end of the play. The interpolator has quite misconceived his relation to the supernatural agencies which work his ruin. BEARE seems to have been used in EL.E. with a sense akin to

And that, distill'd by magicke slights,  
Shall raise such artificiall sprights  
As by the strength of their illusion  
Shall draw him on to his confusion.  
He shall spurne fate, scorne death, and beare  
His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace, and feare:  
And you all know security  
Is mortals' cheefest enimie.

MUSICKE AND A SONG

Hearke! I am call'd; my little spirit, see,  
Sits in a foggy cloud, and staves for me.

SING WITHIN: "COME AWAY COME AWAY" &C

FIRST WITCH

Come, let's make hast; shee'l soone be  
backe againe.

EXEUNT †

'exalt,' N.E.D. 19; cp. the citation from Knowles, "the Spaniards bearing themselves upon their wealth." But the N.E.D. gives the word only in a reflexive usage in this sense. Perhaps, however, HOPES has its EL. meaning of 'confidence,' as in I. 7. 35, and BEARE its common sense of 'maintain,' with 'BOVE' relating to Macbeth and meaning 'superior to.' ¶ 31 GRACE, 'favour.' FEARE rhymes with "beare," cp. note to I. 1. 6. ¶ 32 SECURITY in Shakspeare's time had a shade of meaning now commonly expressed by 'confidence,' cp. "security gives way to [i.e. gives free rein to] conspiracie" Cæs. II. 3. 8. ¶ 33 CHEEFEST in EL.E. connoted an aspect of superiority now usually denoted by 'greatest' or 'best' or 'most important,' e.g. "Within their chiefest temple" I Hen. 6 II. 2. 12, "the king's chiefest friend" 3 Hen. 6 IV. 3. 11, "nephew to your chiefest enemy" Middleton's *A Trick to Catch an Old One*, IV. 2. The first stage direction calls for music to accompany Hecate's exit: in Middleton's play witches are spoken of as flying overhead "with a noise of musicians." The "Come away" song is intended to accompany the exeunt of the other witches, closing the scene. Modern editors run both together into one stage direction which they place after v. 33. ¶ 34 MY LITTLE SPIRIT: Ben Jonson explains this reference in a note to his *Masque of Queenes*: "Their little martin is he that calls them to their conventicles, which is done in a humane voice; . . . their little martens or martinets, of whom I have mentioned before, use this forme in dismissing their conventions, *Eja facessite propere hinc omnes*," i.e. "Come away, come away," etc. This notion may be vaguely involved in the "Padock calls anon" of I. 1. The song referred to in the stage direction is found in Middleton's *Witch* in the form:



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

(*Song above.*)

Come away, come away,  
Hecate, Hecate, come away!

*Hec.* I come, I come, I come, I come,  
With all the speed I may,  
With all the speed I may.  
Where's Stadlin?

(*Voice above.*) Here.

*Hec.* Where's Puckle?

(*Voice above.*) Here;

And Hoppo too, and Hellwain too;  
We lack but you, we lack but you;  
Come away, make up the count.

*Hec.* I will but 'noint, and then I mount.

(*Voice above.*)

There's one comes down to fetch his dues,  
A kiss, a coll, a sip of blood,  
And why thou stay'st so long  
I muse, I muse,  
Since the air's so sweet and good.

*Hec.* O, art thou come?

What news, what news?

*Spirit.* All goes still to our delight;  
Either come, or else  
Refuse, refuse.

*Hec.* Now I 'm furnished for the flight.

. . . . .

*Hec.* (*going up*). Now I go, now I fly,  
Malkin my sweet spirit and I.  
O what a dainty pleasure 'tis  
To ride in the air  
When the moon shines fair,  
And sing and dance and toy and kiss!  
Over woods, high rocks, and mountains,  
Over seas, our mistress' fountains,  
Over steep towers and turrets,  
We fly by night, 'mongst troops of spirits:  
No ring of bells to our ears sounds,  
No howl of wolves, no yelps of hounds;  
No, not the noise of water's breach,  
Or cannon's throat our height can reach.

(*Voices above.*) No ring of bells, etc.

(Cited from Dyce's modernized copy of the MS. discovered by Steevens in 1778.) It is probable that all this is meant by the "Song" given in the stage direction of the FO., though the words "Come away" occur only in the first stanza; for Davenant includes the three stanzas in his *Macbeth*, slightly altering the form of expression here and there.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SCENE VI

The action and thought of this scene, as Davenant noticed in his revision of the play, immediately follow those of Scene IV. Davenant therefore placed it before Scene V, closing the act with the Witch Dance and Song. This arrangement is far better than that of the *textus receptus*, because the recalcitrancy of Macduff, which arouses again Macbeth's murderous thoughts in Scene IV, demands an immediate explanation such as is given in this scene. The scene is really a chorus closing Act III, and serves the purpose of a narrative like the scene which closes Act II; and in its chorus aspect it describes to the audience the action which is to follow, and forecasts the probable consequences, outstripping thus the dramatic development of the play and putting the audience in possession of information of Macduff's flight that Macbeth does not get until later.

The modern conventional scene direction, "The Palace," is probably correct, though it is of little moment where the scene takes place. The imagination of Elizabethan theatre-

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

goers was used to supplying proper scene settings for the dramatic action represented before them. It is likewise a matter of little moment who is meant by "Another Lord," which Johnson proposed to alter to 'Angus,' and Dyce, on the authority of a MS. entry in his copy of FO. I, to 'Rosse.' The scene subserves the purpose of furnishing general information, and is not strictly a dramatic representation.

## SCENE VI: FORRES: THE PALACE ENTER LENOX AND ANOTHER LORD

LENOX

I—IO



¶ I SPEECHES, 'statements,' here 'expressions of suspicion,' cp. note to III. I. 76. HIT, 'fallen in with,' cp. "[I] sought with deedes thy will to hit" Sidney, Ps. XL, as cited in N.E.D. 15. THOUGHTS has its M. E. and e.N. E. meaning, 'anxieties.' Lenox has only voiced the anxiety and alarm of the other lords. ¶ 2

WHICH is probably the connective relative, 'but you can put them in words for yourselves.' For INTERPRET in this sense of 'say explicitly,' see note to I. 3. 46. Lenox has not dared to refer to the matter save in general terms, for specific reference would be treason, and treason is dangerous when Macbeth's spies may be lurking in any corner.

ONELY I SAY, 'I merely remark,' cp. note to III. 4. 98.

¶ 3 BORNE: v. 17 shows that "borne" has here the sense of 'managed,' as perhaps also in I. 7. 17. A passage in Ado II. 3. 229 shows the word in the same sense, "the conference was sadly borne," i.e. was carried on seriously. Baret's *Alvearie* gives "also to do, to execute" as a synonym of 'beare,' but possibly Baret is thinking of Latin *gero* rather than of English 'bear.' The reflexive idiom 'to bear one's self,' i.e. to behave, implies this 'wield' or 'manage' meaning in the simple verb. We are therefore justified in assuming 'wield,' 'manage,' 'conduct' as a transitive meaning of "beare," even if such a sense is not given in N.E.D., and that Lenox means 'things have been curiously managed.' ¶ 4 OF, 'by,' a common e.N.E. meaning of the preposition. MARRY, originally a form of adjuration, 'Mary,' with the vowel shortened through lack of stress. But in EL. E. it was used merely as an exclamation with various applications,—here, 'to be sure,' ironically spoken; i.e. 'to be sure, he did not express his pity for Duncan until after his murder,' the allusion being to that overwrought utterance of Macbeth's about "silver skin" and "golden blood." ¶ 7 WALLE

Y former speeches have but hit  
your thoughts,  
Which can interpret farther:  
onely I say  
Things have bin strangely borne.  
The gracious Duncan  
Was pittied of Macbeth: marry, he was  
dead:  
And the right valiant Banquo walk'd too  
late;  
Whom you may say, if 't please you, Fleans  
kill'd,  
For Fleans fled: men must not walke too  
late,  
Who cannot want the thought, how mon-  
strous  
It was for Malcolme and for Donalbane  
To kill their gracious father? damned fact!

THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

has its EL. sense of 'be abroad,' still preserved in MN.E. 'ghosts walk.' The rhythm of vv. 6 and 7, with its turns and twists, is full of irony: "'x'/'''''''''||'x'|'||'x'|'x'|'||'x'|'x'|'||'. ¶8 WANT is usually explained as being here tantamount to a negative verb, 'not to have,' and as such involved in the double-negative idiom common in M.E. and e.N.E. Similar syntax has been cited by Delius: "That any of these bolder vices wanted Lesse impudence" Wint.T. III.2.56, and "be it but to fortifie her judgement . . for taking a beggar without lesse quality" Cym.I.4.21, where "lesse" is tantamount to a negative, and "wanted lesse" corresponds to MN.E. 'lacked more,' and "without lesse" to MN.E. 'not having more.' But these are not quite parallel cases, and nowhere else (so far as has been noted) does Shakspeare say anything like "Who cannot want" when he means 'Who can fail to have.' It is possible, however, that the interrogation-point after FATHER is the EL. printer's exclamation-point, denoting the irony in Lenox's words, and that WHO is the EL. connective relative separated from its antecedent as it was in I.2.21, and connected with it only by the sentence stress which the speaker gave it: 'You may say Fleance killed him, for Fleance fled—men must not walk too late!—since you, of course, cannot have escaped the reflection how,' etc. It is also possible that "Men must not walke too late" has fallen out of place and should immediately follow "Banquo walk'd too late": if we may go so far as to assume such a displacement the sense of vv. 6 and 7 becomes perfectly clear. Of the emendations—"You cannot want" Hanmer, 'Who can want' or 'Who cannot have' Jennens, 'We cannot want' Keightley, 'Who can now want' Cartwright—the last gives apt stress, Who can nōw wānt, and good sense: 'As Fleance killed Banquo because Fleance fled, every one must now conclude that Malcolm and Donalbaine killed their father because they fled'; and it involves only a printer's error of misreading *w* as *t* in his copy. MONSTROUS has two trisyllabic forms in EL.E., one through the extra syllable caused by *r* (see note to I.5.40) and the other due to analogy with the Latin *monstruum*, viz. "monstruous"; cp. "Her fault so vile and monstrous before" Drayton's Heroicall Epistles, ed. Sp. Soc., p.196, and "So filthy and so monstruous that sure I think no age" Newton's Thebais, ed. Sp. Soc., p.51. ¶10 DAMNED,

ACT III      SCENE VI      11-16

How it did grieve Macbeth! Did he not  
straight,

In pious rage, the two delinquents teare,  
That were the slaves of drinke and thrallles  
of sleepe?

Was not that nobly done? I, and wisely too;  
For 't would have anger'd any heart alive  
To heare the men deny't.

'damnable' or 'damning,' another illustration of the force of the EL. suffix *-ed*; cp. N.E.D. 3 and V.I. 39. FACT, 'crime': the word was commonly used in the sixteenth century in this sense, and is still retained in the legal phrase 'before the fact.'

¶ 12 DELINQUENTS: the word is somewhat stronger in EL.E. than now, and stands for 'criminals'; cp. "delinquent, a criminal" *Glossographia*. TEARE in EL.E.

has a range of meaning which includes *laniare*, cp. "*laniatus*, rent: torne: cut in peeces" Cooper, and "All his body is rent or torne, *laceratus est toto corpore*" Baret's *Alvearie*. In this sense it is often equivalent to MN.E. 'mangle,' cp. Cotgrave, "*deschirer*, to teare, dismember, mangle," and "teare him for his bad verses" Cæs.III.3.34, and "inforced hate . . shall rudelie teare thee" *Lucr.*669. The word is therefore aptly used here to portray the fury with which Macbeth, in Lenox's presence, gashed the sleeping grooms, and gives no ground for supposing that Shakspeare did not write the passage, as Cl.Pr. argues from what its editors, construing the word in its MN. sense, consider inapt verbiage. ¶15 HEART ALIVE: "of the world" and "alive" (which is tantamount to the same no-



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

tion, for it represents M.E. "on-live," 'in life') are frequently used in M.E. and e.N.E. as intensifying phrases with no definite meaning. In the American 'sakes alive!' and the colloquial 'man alive!' the idiom is still preserved. Lenox's words are tantamount to 'any heart,' with strong accent on 'any.' ¶16 DENY 'T, cp. note to 1.2.7.

¶17 In HEHASBORNEALL THINGS WELL the slight verse stress on "has"—'yes, he has managed everything well'—adds to Lenox's irony. The stresses of this passage are so apt, and so clearly reflect the bitter irony of one who will not express his thought frankly, that it is perhaps worth while to note them: "Í, and wisely tóo; Fór 't would have ánger'd ány héart álíve To héaré the mén dený 't"; then, turning the thought with a reversal:

"Só that Í sáy, Hě hás bórne áll thínghs wéll: and Í dŏ thínke Thát had he Dúncan's sŏnnes únder his kěy—Ás, and 't pléase héaven, he sháll not—théy should fínde What 't wére to kíl a fáther." ¶18 UNDER HIS KEY, 'in his power,' i.e. as he had Duncan. ¶19 AND is a M.E. and e.N.E. use of the conjunction in the sense of 'if,' 'provided that.' "And it" was frequently contracted in EL.E. to "an't" in lightly stressed phrases like "an't please you," etc. From this a fictitious word, 'an,' meaning 'if,' has been created, and this non-existent word has been put into Shakspeare wherever "and" occurs in the sense of 'if'; see N.E.D. s.v. ¶20 WERE, the subjunctive of unfulfilled condition, common in e.N.E. and still in use. ¶21 Lenox passes from these thoughts with the reflection that it was Macduff's frank speech that got him into trouble. BROAD WORDS, 'frank speech.' In the MN.E. 'broad jest' 'broad' is similarly used but restricted to the meaning 'vulgarly frank'; in 'broad hint' the EL. meaning survives in its original force. CAUSE is not 'because' clipped for the sake of rhythm, but a e.N.E. idiom common in prose as well as poetry, and still preserved in the dialectic 'cause why' and the 'cause' of vulgar English. FAYLE, thus used in the sense of 'deny,' 'refuse,' 'withhold from,' with a direct object, has not yet been found elsewhere in EL.E. nor recorded in N.E.D. A similar usage occurs in "I will never faile Beginning nor supplyment [i.e. support]" Cym. III.4.181. ¶22 TYRANT, 'usurper,' cp. "To prove him tyrant this reason may suffice, that Henry liveth still" 3Hen.6 III.3.71. His using the word with this sense argues nothing as to Shakspeare's knowledge or ignorance of Greek, for 'usurper' is a recognized e.N.E. meaning of the word, cp. "tyrant, a cruel governour or usurper" Glossographia, and "tyrant, one that has usurped the sovereign power in a state," "tyranny, cruel and violent empire or dominion unlawfully usurped" Kersey's Dictionarium. The word had this meaning of 'usurper' even in M.E., cp. Piers Plowman, III.211, "go atack tho [i.e. those] tyrauns," i.e. Falsehood and Flattery. As in so many other instances, Shakspeare's apparent knowledge of the classics turns out to be only a wide familiarity with English. Lenox has now thrown off his mask of irony and boldly calls Macbeth a usurper. ¶24 BESTOWES HIMSELFE, 'lodges,' a reflexive meaning of "bestow" common in e.N.E., cp. III.1.30.

## ACT III SCENE VI

16-24

So that I say

He has borne all things well: and I do thinke  
That had he Duncan's sonnes under his  
key—

As, and 't please heaven, he shall not—they  
should finde

What 't were to kill a father: so should  
Fleans.

But, peace! for from broad words, and cause  
he fayl'd

His presence at the tyrant's feast, I heare,  
Macduffe lives in disgrace. Sir, can you tell  
Where he bestowes himselfe?

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶ 24 SONNE is "sonnes" in FO. I, which seems to be a misprint. In FOS. I, 2, and 3 "lives" was altered to "live" in v. 26 and "is" allowed to stand. But only Malcolm fled to England: Donalbaine went to Ireland. ¶ 25 HOLDS, 'withholds,' cp. "Your crowne and kingdome indirectly held From him the native and true challenger" Hen. 5 II. 4. 94. DUE OF BIRTH, 'birthright': "due" has this legal sense in EL. E., cp. "The key of this infernal pit by due . . . I keep" 'Par. Lost' II. 850 (cited in N. E. D. 6). The article is equivalent to a MN. E. possessive pronoun. ¶ 27 OF, 'by.' PIOUS here and HOLY KING, v. 30, are due to the fact that Malcolm, according to Holinshed, fled to the court of Edward the Confessor, cp. note to IV. 3. 144. ¶ 30 UPON HIS AYD, 'with his [i.e. the king's] support,' the infinitive having the sense of 'that he may.' UPON has a wide range of usage in EL. E. to express various forms of cause, cp. "I am come hither . . . upon my man's instigation" 2 Hen. 6 II. 3. 87, and "they Upon their ancient mallice will forget . . . these his new honors" Cor. II. 1. 243. The phrase is usually explained 'in his [i.e. Malcolm's] aid,' but EL. syntax does not warrant this construction. ¶ 31 WAKE, 'rouse,' is still in poetic usage in MN. E. NORTHUMBERLAND, i.e. the county, not the earl, of that name: in Holinshed Seyward is the Earl of Northumberland. ¶ 35 FREE

## ACT III SCENE VI 24-39

### LORD

The sonne of Duncane,  
From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth,  
Lives in the English court, and is receyv'd  
Of the most pious Edward with such grace  
That the malevolence of fortune nothing  
Takes from his high respect. Thither Mac-  
duffe

Is gone to pray the holy king, upon his ayd  
To wake Northumberland and warlike Sey-  
ward,

That by the helpe of these, with Him above  
To ratifie the worke, we may againe  
Give to our tables meate, sleepe to our nights,  
Free from our feasts and banquets bloody  
knives,

Do faithfull homage and receive free honors:  
All which we pine for now. And this report  
Hath so exasperate their king that hee  
Prepares for some attempt of warre.

in Shakspeare's time meant 'banish,' cp. "Free thine owne torment" Daniel, and "Free suspicion" Ford (cited in N. E. D. 4), and there is therefore no ground for assuming a transposition of notions as did Steevens, or for amending the text with patches like 'keep' for "free." BLOODY KNIVES is probably a pregnant term for deeds of violence and assassination, and is Shakspeare's way of implying Holinshed's statement that Macbeth "committed manie horrible slaughters and murders both as well of the nobles as commons." Delius thought it a reference to the murderer in III. 4. ¶ 36 FREE HONORS, 'guiltless honours,' not bought by treachery. Hamlet says, "Your majestie, and wee that have free soules, it touches us not" III. 2. 251. The words recall Banquo's "bosome franchis'd" in II. 1. 28. ¶ 38 EXASPERATE, the EL. past participle without suffix, cp. note to III. 4. 143. THEIR KING of FO. I is changed to 'the king' in the Cambridge Text and in modern editions, and taken to refer to Macbeth. The Folio's "their" might easily be a mistake for an original "the," since the definite article with possessive force and the possessive adjective pronoun, especially 'the' and 'their,' are constantly subject to interchange in EL. texts: often a first edition will have the former and later editions the latter, showing that in the early

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

part of the 17th century editors and printers felt at liberty to substitute the more modern form, as they felt at liberty to make a singular verb plural when it had a plural subject. But neither "their king" nor "the king" can mean Macbeth, for Macbeth does not yet know of Macduff's going to England—Lenox himself informs him of it in IV. 1. 142. Delius construes THIS REPORT as referring to Malcolm's escape to England and having nothing to do with Macduff and the reprisal which Macbeth will make upon him, THEIR KING implying that the lord cannot accept Macbeth as his king, because he belongs to Malcolm's faction; but this explanation is not satisfactory. THIS REPORT is in Shakspeare sometimes tantamount to 'the report of this,' e.g. "*Messala*. Seeke him [*i.e.* Pindarus], Titinius, whilst I go to meet The noble Brutus, thrusting this report Into his eares; I may say 'thrusting' it, For piercing steele and darts invenomed Shall be as welcome to the eares of Brutus As tydings of this sight" *Cæs.* V. 3. 73. Here there has been no 'report'; Titinius and Messala have themselves found Cassius's dead body. So likewise in John IV. 2. 260, "Doth Arthur live? O hast thee to the peeres, Throw this report [*i.e.* the statement of this fact] on their incensed rage." We have already noticed (cp. note to I. 5. 3) that "report" in EL. E. was not so strictly limited as it is in MN. E.: that it could mean 'statements,' 'rumour,' or 'reputation'; the apparent objective use of "this report" is a natural consequence of such a range of meaning, the "this" referring, not to the statement itself, but to the conditions which the statement represented to the mind. If we may assume this syntax here, the lord simply says 'The King of England, having been told of these conditions which we live under, is preparing for an invasion' (cp. note on "attempt of warre" below). Lenox and the lord are traitors, and that the latter has been in secret communication with England since Malcolm's flight ten years before is not inconsistent with Macbeth's real and Lenox's assumed ignorance in IV. 1. 142. What the lord informs Lenox of is that the "English powre," referred to in V. 2. 1, is already 'being mustered.' In IV. 3. 43 Malcolm, on Macduff's arrival, tells him that he has an offer from the King of England of "goodly thousands," and that even before his coming Old Seyward was on the point of setting out for Scotland with ten thousand men. This scene presents to the audience a condition of things that Macbeth is unaware of, viz. that Malcolm has been doing something more than telling lies during his residence in England. There is nothing inconsistent in it; on the contrary, it helps to keep before the mind, as a single picture, a long and complex series of events covering a wide range of time and space. It is thus that Shakspeare gives to history the marvellous unity of art, as it were focusing its varying aspects into one single burning-point of human interest. ¶ 39 ATTEMPT means 'attack' in EL. E., cp. "No man can charge us of any attempt against the realm" (citation dated 1584 in N. E. D. 3), and "to attempt, or try to make war upon, *attentare aliquem bello*" Phr. Gen.

## ACT III

## SCENE VI

39-43

LENOX

Sent he to Macduffe?

LORD

He did: and with an absolute 'Sir, not I,'  
The clowdy messenger turnes me his backe,  
And hums, as who should say 'You 'l rue the  
time

That clogges me with this answer.'

¶ 39 SENT HE: the pronoun is significant; Lenox brings the talk back to Macbeth with an inquiry as to why Macduff fled. He knows only that he was in disgrace for not attending the banquet and for unguarded language: why did he fly? Did Macbeth send for Macduff to come to him? For SENT in this sense, cp. note to III. 4. 129. It is implied here that Macbeth has sent for Macduff to come to court and explain his absence, as he said he would do in III. 4. 130. ¶ 40 ABSOLUTE, 'positive,'



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

cp. "Be absolute for death" Meas. III. I. 5 (N.E.D. 11). ¶41 CLOWDY, used of persons in EL.E. with the sense 'gloomy,' 'sullen,' see N.E.D. 1 b. TURNES ME is an instance of the EL.E. so-called ethical dative. It is frequent in Shakspeare and quite untranslatable in MN. terms. As here, it expresses the speaker's personal interest in what he is saying—the narrator of the story enjoys the situation. ¶42 HUMS is still used in the phrase 'to hum and haw,' to express embarrassment or hesitation, cp. N.E.D. 2 c; but in M.E. and e.N.E. it may stand independently, cp. "Al rosy hewed tho waxe she And gan to hum" Chaucer's Troilus, II. 1150, and "hum and stroke thy beard" Tro.&Cr. 1. 3. 165 (cited from N.E.D.). AS WHO SHOULD SAY is a phrase still retained in literary usage, in which "as" has its e.N.E. meaning of 'as if,' and the relative is used in its M.E. indefinite sense of 'some one.' ¶43 CLOG is originally a 'block attached to the leg or neck of a man to impede motion'; this association gives the verb its meaning of 'hamper,' 'embarrass.' The word reflects the messenger's dread of Macbeth's temper.

## ACT III SCENE VI 43-49

LENOX

And that well might

Advise him to a caution, t' hold what distance  
His wisdom can provide. Some holy angell  
Flye to the court of England and unfold  
His message ere he come, that a swift blessing  
May soone returne to this our suffering  
country  
Under a hand accurs'd!

LORD

I 'le send my prayers with him.

EXEUNT

¶44 For ADVISE . . TO in the sense of 'recommending a course of action,' see N.E.D. 9 b. CAUTION, 'precaution,' N.E.D. 5; the indefinite article is used as in I. 7. 68.

T'HOLD, 'in preserving,' illustrating the EL. usage of the infinitive, corresponding to a MN.E. participial phrase. ¶49 Phrases modifying participles used adjectively are often separated from their participles, as here. A similar arrangement occurs in II. 3. 138.

Acts I and II had a single theme, the murder of Duncan, and apparent success crowned the wicked work; the 'consequence' for the time was trammelled up, and Macbeth had gone to Scone to be invested. As Banquo says in the opening verses of Act III, he has it now, king, Cawdor, Glamis, all, as the weird women promised. The third act of the drama opens with a fresh theme, the murder of Banquo. Though so rapidly brought to its execution,—the faulty purpose almost cheek by jowl with the deed,—the new theme can be traced through the same course as the old. In the opening verses the unsuspecting personality of Banquo is presented, as was Duncan's in the early part of the play; and, like Duncan as a guest in Macbeth's house, he is in Macbeth's power (vv. 1-44). The 'thought,' already full formed in Macbeth's mind, is clearly represented in detail in the soliloquy of vv. 49-71, recalling the soliloquy of I. 7. 28 ff.; the 'instrument' for its execution, already provided in the maliciousness of the two disgruntled soldiers, is represented to the audience in the succeeding dialogue, vv. 72-142. In Scene II Macbeth shares this new 'thought' with Lady Macbeth, but this time vaguely and darkly. The reason for this is not far to seek. If we turn to the wonderful sleep-walking scene, where Lady Macbeth presents in broken mutterings a miniature of the mental aspects of the tragedy as they concern her

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

and her husband, we shall see her not only repeating the horror of Duncan's murder, for which she is directly responsible, but haunted by visions of Banquo and Lady Macduff as well. They all blend together in one awful scene that she cannot banish from her mind. Shakspeare intends, therefore, to put before us a double tragedy, its two parts interwoven inextricably, its two actors suffering each the penalty for the acts of the other. The execution of the 'thought' is the subject of Scene III. The new murder links itself with the old. But the removal of Banquo, instead of securing for Macbeth 'peace' from the 'restless extasy' caused by Duncan's murder, adds fresh horror to it; and the second deed of dreadful note not only brings its own immediate retribution but precipitates the retribution for the first. The psychological 'consequences' of the two are marvellously interwoven, for in Scene IV Duncan's ghost as well as Banquo's haunts Macbeth. Whether the former actually appears to him or not is of little consequence: the "send those that we bury backe" clearly shows that the murdered Duncan as well as the "blood-boltred" Banquo is present to his mind. Not only is peace unattainable now, but from Scene IV on it is a fight for life itself. Banquo, the menace to peace, is removed only to give place to a menace from another quarter—Macduff. And this new situation is harder to deal with than the old, for Macduff will not put himself in the tyrant's power; he holds his distance. Act III thus not only reveals the Nemesis in its subjective aspect in Macbeth's insanity, but prepares the way for his final overthrow in the 'raising of rebellion's head' by Macduff and Malcolm. The new Macduff motif thus begins to develop in the end of Scene IV, and Scene VI as a chorus forecasts the course of this new consequence, which will be the theme of Act IV.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SCENE I OF ACT IV

The witch scene which opens Act IV is quite different from that of Act III, both in its style and in its matter, replete as it is with popular, not classic, notions of witchcraft. It returns to the four-wave rhythm found in Scene III of Act I save for a few obvious patches that are written in the verse form of Scene V of Act III.

Shakspeare found his material in Holinshed, who says that Macbeth "had learned of certaine wizzards in whose words he put great confidence (for that the prophesie had happened so right which the three fairies or weird-sisters had declared unto him) how that he ought to take heed of Makduffe, who in time to come should seeke to destroye him. And surelie hereupon had he put Makduffe to death but that a certaine witch whom hee had in great trust had told him that he should never be slaine with man borne of anie woman, nor vanquished till the wood of Bernane came to the castle of Dunsinane." Shakspeare works these together and unites them with the prediction of I.3.67.

The place of the scene was marked by Rowe as 'a dark cave'; the modern scene direction is 'a cavern,' which is consistent with III.5.15. But what is Lenox's relation to the action? "Come in without there" indicates that Macbeth is in some enclosed space, and this must be outside the castle, for messengers on the way to the king are spoken of as 'coming by.' But Lenox can scarcely have gone with Macbeth to a cavern known to be haunted by witches, that the king may consult the powers of darkness while he stands sentinel at the rendezvous, else he would have shown some interest in the result of the interview; moreover, in v. 49 Macbeth's meeting with the witches seems to be more or less fortuitous, and not by appointment. That Lenox, like Banquo, has been walking with Macbeth near the castle and has left him momentarily to see who it is that is riding by is not sufficiently clear from the dialogue or from the action. But perhaps an Elizabethan audience would understand some such situation and would not be too curious in localizing the scene. In default of a better scene direction we shall have to retain Rowe's in its modern form, 'a cavern,' and assume that Lenox is waiting outside.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

## THE FOURTH ACT

SCENE I: A CAVERN: IN THE MIDDLE A BOILING CAULDRON  
THUNDER: ENTER THE THREE WITCHES

I—II

FIRST WITCH

THRICE the brinded cat hath mew'd.

SECOND WITCH. Thrice and once the hedge-pigge whin'd.

THIRD WITCH. Harpier cries, 'Tis time, 'tis time.'

FIRST WITCH. Round about the caldron go;

In the poyson'd entrailes throw.

Toad, that under cold stone

Dayes and nights has thirty one

Sweltred venom sleeping got,

Boyle thou first i' th' charmed pot.

ALL

Double, double, toile and trouble;

Fire burne and cauldron bubble.

¶ I BRINDED is the EL. form of 'brindled,' see N.E.D. *s.v.* The word is now usually applied to dogs and cattle marked with streaks, and a 'brindled cat' is called a

'tabby cat.' ¶ 2 THRICE AND ONCE was emended by Theobald, on the score of propriety, to 'twice and once.' But Ben Jonson is guilty of the very impropriety with which Theobald charges Shakspeare in using even numbers in witchcraft ritual: "And if thou dost what we would have thee doe Thou shalt have three, thou shalt have foure, Thou shalt have ten, thou shalt have a score" 'Masque of Queenes' p. 171, and here Jonson has put it out of the power of the emendator to alter his text. Moreover, "thrice and once" is four in a series of notation by odd numbers. The comma of the FO. after THRICE seems, therefore, to be due to the printer's close punctuation. A similar phrase, "I have been merry twice and once, ere now," occurring in 2Hen.4 v. 3.42, is not so punctuated; but just above it, v. 36, we have the punctuation "both short, and tall," FO. p. 98. HEDGE-PIGGE: the association of the hedgehog with witchcraft is very old: a relic of it is preserved in MN. E. 'urchin' (a M.E. and e.N.E. word for hedgehog), which, popularly used as the designation of a mischief-working fairy, was then applied to a mischief-making boy. "Hedge-pigge" seems to be a fanciful diminutive of 'hedgehog,' coined by Shakspeare. ¶ 3 HARPIER, like Middleton's "Tiffin" and Jonson's "Rouncie," is a fanciful name for an evil spirit, here conceived of as 'sitting aloft' and directing the witches' movements as did Padock and Graymalkin in I.1.8. It is probably an EL. popular form of 'harpy,' as 'harper' for 'harpy' is found in the quarto edition of Marlowe's Tamburlaine, II. 7, and it is not likely that these two independent instances are printer's errors. "Enter Ariell like a Harpey" occurs as the stage direction to Temp. III. 3. 52. As usual, there are no quotation-marks in FO. I, but 'TIS TIME seems to be the substance of



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

Harpier's cry. ¶ 5 Similar ingredients make up witches' charms in Ben Jonson's *Masque of Queenes* and Middleton's *Witch*, Jonson supplying a rich commentary from classical demonology to illustrate his folk-lore. FO.1 has no point after THROW. ¶ 6 In the *Masque of Queenes* 'the toad that breeds under the wall' is an ingredient of one of the witch charms. Such rhythms as COLD STONE, in which the emotional significance of a word forces a slight pause after it which makes the descending part of the rhythm wave, are frequent in English popular poetry. "Swifter then the moon's sphere," *Mids.* III. 7, is cited by Delius as another instance of the intrusion of this popular rhythm into Shakspeare's four-wave falling verse, but such a verse as Jonson's "Flów wáter, and blów wínd" in the *Masque of Queenes*, p. 169, is a much better instance. These juxtapositions of stressed impulses are a native feature of English verse and have never been entirely banished from lyric measures. Editors try to emend them out of Shakspeare, and, laying the responsibility for this verse upon the omnipeccant printer, have given us 'under the cold stone,' 'under a cold stone,' 'under coldest stone,' 'under cold, cold stone,' 'under cold-e stone' (an English flexional monstrosity), 'under co-uld stone,' 'underneath cold stone,' 'under some cold stone,' 'under cursed stone.' ¶ 7 ONE in EL. E. had not yet developed its initial *w* with the consequent change of *o* to *ə*, so the word is here a perfect rhyme to "stone." FO.1 punctuates with a comma after NIGHTS and a colon after ONE; but it must be remembered that in EL. printing a colon was a lighter point than it is now, and frequently stood for a modern comma. ¶ 8 The usual EL. meaning of SWELTER is "*calore suffocare*" (to stifle with heat), as it is usually glossed. "Swelt" is associated with fever in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, I. vii. 6, "the cheerful blood like a fever fit through all his body swelts," where it is almost equivalent to 'boils.' Skinner gives "swelt" and "swelter" as different forms of the same word. The picture seems to be that of a toad which has "pestilent poyson in her bowelles" Lyly's *Euphues*, ed. Arber, p. 327, exuding this at the mouth during its sleep. The popular superstition that toads were venomous is also reflected in A.Y.L.II. I. 13. ¶ 10 The FO.'S comma after the second DOUBLE is removed by the Cambridge Text, but the words mark a cæsura and are probably unrelated to the rest of the sentence, as in the child's charm "King, king, double king, Never trade back again." ¶ 11 FIRE is dissyllabic, as often in MN. E. verse.

## ACT IV

## SCENE I

12-21

### SECOND WITCH

Fillet of a fenny snake,  
In the cauldron boyle and bake;  
Eye of newt and toe of frogge,  
Wooll of bat and tongue of dogge,  
Adder's forke and blinde-wormes sting,  
Lizard's legge and howlet's wing,  
For a charme of powrefull trouble,  
Like a hell-broth boyle and bubble.

ALL

Double, double, toyle and trouble;  
Fire burne and cauldron bubble.

¶ 12 FILLET in EL. E. was used to designate the lobes of the liver, N. E. D. 5 c, and also the lobes of the lung, cp. "And lungs with fillets whole unwounded hung" May's *Lucan*, VI. I (ed. 1635, sig. L). The word also means 'muscle-' or 'nerve-fibre,' N. E. D. 5. Either of these meanings fits better with "Eye of newt and toe of frogge," etc., than does the word in the sense of 'a rolled slice,' as it is usually interpreted. FENNY, 'fen-inhabiting,' see note to III. 2. 51, and cp. "Dragons fenny and living in marishes" *Topsell*, 1607 (in N. E. D. 2). Harrison, II. 35, says "in our fennie countries . . . serpents are found of greater quantitie [i.e. size] than either our adder or snake."

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶ 13 BOYLE AND BAKE are intransitive; one of the meanings of the latter word in EL. E. is to 'cake' or 'coagulate into a sticky mass,' N. E. D. 4. ¶ 14 NEWTS, the small reptiles known in America as lizards, were popularly believed to be hurtful in Shakspeare's time, cp. "Newts and blinde wormes, do no wrong" Mids. II. 2. 11, and frogs were thought to be bred of the slime of standing pools; see Phipson, p. 322. ¶ 15 In the Masque of Queenes it is the bat's wings that are used for the witch's charm on the authority of Corn. Agrippa *de occulta Philosophia*, I. 15, who recommends also 'bat's blood.' The popular dread of bats is still well known. ¶ 16 FORKE is the EL. name for the tongue of a serpent, cp. "the soft and tender forke Of a poore worme" Meas. III. 1. 16. BLINDE-WORMES were also reckoned among the popular reptile antipathies—"common annoyances" as Harrison calls them—of Shakspeare's time, cp. "Neverthelesse we have a blinde worme . . which some also do call (and upon better ground) by the name of slow wormes . . and yet their venem deadlie," etc., Harrison's England, III. vii (cp. Timon IV. 3. 182). ¶ 17 The LIZARD is referred to as venomous in 2 Hen. 6 III. 2. 325, "Their softest touch as smart as lyzard's stings." The word was loosely applied in EL. E. as in MN. E. to designate any lizard-like reptile from the newt to the crocodile. HOWLET is a M. E. and e. N. E. form of 'owlet,' cp. O. FR. *hulotte*. A charm ingredient in the Masque of Queenes is "the scrich-owles eggs and the feathers black." ¶ 18 POWREFULL, 'potent,' cp. "powrefull rime" Sonn. LV. 2, "powerfull sound" All's W. II. 1. 179. TROUBLE: the sense of 'means of physical annoyance' has not quite faded from the meaning of the word, though now somewhat vague.

## ACT IV SCENE I 22-36

### THIRD WITCH

Scale of dragon, tooth of wolfe,  
Witches' mummey, maw and gulfe  
Of the ravin'd salt sea sharke,  
Roote of hemlocke digg'd i' th' darke,  
Liver of blaspheming Jew,  
Gall of goate, and slippes of yew  
Sliver'd in the moones ecclipse,  
Nose of Turke and Tartar's lips,  
Finger of birth-strangled babe  
Ditch-deliver'd by a drab—  
Make the grewell thicke and slab:  
Adde thereto a tiger's chawdron,  
For th' ingredience of our cawdron.

### ALL

Double, double, toyle and trouble;  
Fire burne and cauldron bubble.

a captive Moore, of the best complexion, and after long dieting and medicining of him, cut off his head in his sleepe, and gashing his bodie full of wounds, put therein all the best spices, and then wrap him up in hay, being covered with a seare-cloth [cp. Merch. II. 7. 51], after which they burie him in a moyst place, covering the bodie with earth. Five dayes being passed, they take him up againe, and removing the seare-cloth and hay,

¶ 22 In Ben Jonson it is "*oculi draconum*" (cp. v. 15) and "*lupi crines*" that are the charm ingredients. ¶ 23 WITCHES' MUMMEY: the EL. *mumma* or mummy, according to the New World of Words, is "a kind of pitchy substance arising from moisture which is sweat out of dead bodies that have been embalmed with divers sorts of spices." Purchas's Pilgrimage, V, p. 682, speaks of a method of manufacturing this in Ethiopia: "They make mummia otherwise then in other partes, where it is eyther made of bodies buried in the sands or taken out of ancient sepulcheres where they had been laide being embalmed with spices. For they take

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

hang him up in the sunne, whereby the bodie resolveth and droppeth a substance like pure balme, which liquor is of great price." Some such horrible concoction as this Shakspeare evidently had in mind here and in Oth. III. 4.74, where he says "There's magicke in the web of it. . . And it was dyde in mummey which the skilfull Conserve of maidens' hearts." MAW usually means stomach in EL. E., but the word is applied in MN. E. to the air-bladder of a fish—see Cent. Dict. 3—and may have been so used in EL. E. also. For GULFE as applied to the stomach of an animal, cp. "Whether thou wilt remaine with the serpent and . . . be swallowed up into the gowlfe of his body" Arlington, 1566 (cited in N. E. D. 3 b). In Shakspeare's time the word rhymed with "wolfe." ¶ 24 RAVIN'D, "gorged with prey," another instance of the -ed suffix in the sense of 'full of.' The noun "ravin," in the sense of 'prey,' occurs in Nahum II. 12, "The lion . . . filled . . . his holes with pray and his dennes with ravine" (cited in Cent. Dict.). SHARKE as the name of the dog-fish or 'hound-fish' seems to have been a new word in EL. E., and hence, probably, the epithet SALT SEA, i.e. *marinus*, cp. "fishes called sharkes, most ravenous devourers" Purchas's Pilgrimage, V, p. 712. Sir John Hawkins also says that the "shark is a fish like unto those which wee call dog-fishes" Purchas, IV, p. 1330 (cited in Phipson). ¶ 25 HEMLOCKE, the *cicuta* already referred to in I. 3.84; cp. "hemlocke is very evyl, dangerous, hurtful, and venomous" Lyte, 1578 (cited in N. E. D.). In the Masque of Queens it is the mandrake that is 'digged in the dark.' ¶ 26 Whether BLASPHEMING is intended in its modern sense of

## ACT IV SCENE I 37-38

### SECOND WITCH

Coole it with a baboones blood,  
Then the charme is firme and good.

'blaspheming against God' (cp. John III. 1. 161) and Shakspeare had in mind 'the apostate Jew,' or whether it is intended in its strictly Elizabethan sense of 'speaking ill against,' 'reviling,' N. E. D. 3, is uncertain. We learn from Purchas's Pilgrimage, V, p. 155, how deep was the prejudice against the Jews in England as well as in the rest of Europe during the sixteenth century, and how the Elizabethan, in reckoning him with Turks and infidels, thought that he was only helping the Almighty to carry out a Biblical curse. A sympathetic account of the Jew in Elizabethan England will be found in Mr. Sidney Lee's essay printed in the Shak. Soc. Trans., '87-'92, pp. 143 ff. ¶ 27 SLIPPES, cp. "a slip of a tree, *surculus*" Phr. Gen. The YEW was held in sinister regard from the fact that it was planted in churchyards, cp. "dismall yew" Titus II. 3. 107. ¶ 28 SLIVER'D, 'lopped off,' 'clipped,' cp. "sliver, *findo*" Coles, and "She that her selfe will sliver and disbranch From her materiall sap" Lear IV. 2. 34. ¶ 29 TURKE AND TARTAR, the latter word designating the hordes of northern China, were the two great divisions of the terrible infidel perils that menaced Christendom in the sixteenth century, a terror that is still reflected in our modern usage of these words for persons of a savage disposition. ¶ 30 Middleton's lines in the Witch, I. 2, "Here, take this unbaptized brat; Boil it well, preserve the fat, You know 't is precious to transfer Our 'nointed flesh into the air" reflects the same notion; cp. also Jonson, "Their killing of infants is common, both for confection of their ointment (wherto one ingredient is the fat boiled)," etc. So, too, Reginald Scot, X. vii: "R [i.e. take] The fat of young children and seeth it, . . . reserving the thickest of that which remaineth boiled in the bottome" (cp. v. 32). The sound of *a* in BABE was something like that of MN. *æ* in 'grass,' as pronounced in the United States, so that the rhymed syllables present only a difference in length and not one of character. ¶ 31 FO. I and modern editions place a comma after "drab." ¶ 32 SLAB: the usual form of the word is "slabby" in Minsheu, Kersey, Skinner, Holyoke, etc.; it means 'miry,' 'sticky,' 'pasty': "slab" is a noun meaning 'mud puddle' in Kersey and in the Glossographia. ¶ 33 CHAWDRON, 'the entrails of a beast,' N. E. D. 2. ¶ 34 INGREDIENCE, cp. note to I. 7. 11. ¶ 37 BABOON



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

and "babioun," another form of the same word, were stressed upon the first syllable in Shakspeare's time, cp. "bábion or great monckie" Minsheu, and "a babian or monkey, mice" Percival. The same stress occurs in "For what thou professt a báboon, could he speak" Per. IV.6.189. ¶ 38 FIRME, 'close in texture,' N.E.D. I; the reference is to v.32. The 'ingredience' of this mixture could not possibly be represented upon the stage. Its horrible interest is literary, bringing together a multitude of gruesome associations, "poyson," "entrailes," "toad," "cold stone," "sweltred venom," etc.—a catalogue of popular repugnances that haunt the imagination of the child and are never quite banished from the mind of the maturer man. The chorus also has the traditional rhythm association of popular poetry, 'x'x'x||'x'x'x||'x'x'x'x'x, a typical charm series of rhythm waves whose impulses begin with explosive consonants. Such poetry is of the sort that human nature weaves about the supernatural, and is quite different from the artificial verse of Act III, Scene V.

## ACT IV SCENE I 39-47

†ENTER HECAT AND THE OTHER THREE WITCHES

HECAT

O well done! I commend your paines;  
And every one shall share i' th' gaines:  
And now about the cauldron sing,  
Like elves and fairies in a ring,  
Inchanting all that you put in.

MUSICKE AND A SONG: "BLACKE SPIRITS" & C  
HECAT RETIRES†

SECOND WITCH

By the pricking of my thumbes,  
Something wicked this way comes.  
Open lockes, who ever knockes!

46, 47

that the song called for is to be found in Middleton's Witch as well as in Davenant's Macbeth. It reads thus:

Black spirits and white, red spirits and gray,  
Mingle, mingle, mingle, you that mingle may!  
Titty, Tiffin,  
Keep it stiff in;  
Firedrake, Puckey,

Make it lucky;  
Liard, Robin,  
You must bob in.  
Round, around, around, about, about!  
All ill come running in, all good keep out!

¶ 39 The stress "wéll dōne" may be EL. idiom: Shakspeare seems to employ the same stress in II.4.37, but in all other instances it is "wéll dōne." ¶ 43 This rhymeless verse is not in Davenant's version. The song in the Witch is introduced by "Stir, stir about whilst I begin the charme": with the excision of the last two words, this would make a good pair for "Enchanting all that you put in." Whether or not vv. 44-47 are part of the interpolation is not certain. In Davenant's version they are in four-wave rising rhythm, "I, by the pricking of my thumbs, Know something wicked this way comes," which may have been their original form. If this be so they belong with the interpolated Hecate passage above. Shakspeare's witches would hardly say of Macbeth, "Something wicked this way

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

comes"; the attitude which these words represent fits in rather with 124 ff., an indubitably interpolated passage. The itching of the thumbs as an omen is commented upon in Brand's *Antiquities*, but only on the basis of this passage. ¶46 The opening of locks as a witches' prerogative is referred to in Jonson's *Sad Shepherd*, II.2, "Search for a weed To open locks with."

## ACT IV

## SCENE I

48-61

ENTER MACBETH

MACBETH

How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags!

What is 't you do?

ALL

A deed without a name.

MACBETH

I conjure you, by that which you professe,  
How ere you come to know it, answer me:  
Though you untye the windes and let them  
fight

Against the churches; though the yesty waves  
Confound and swallow navigation up;  
Though bladed corne be lodg'd and trees  
blown downe;

Though castles topple on their warders'  
heads;

Though pallaces and pyramids do slope  
Their heads to their foundations; though the  
treasure

Of nature's germaine tumble altogether,  
Even till destruction sicken; answer me  
To what I aske you.

¶48 SECRET, 'occult,' cp. "If secret powers suggest but truth To my divining thoughts" 3Hen.6 IV. 6. 68. Macbeth here uses the term BLACK in its EL. sense of 'sinister,' cp. I.4.51, IV.3.52, and "that black name, Edward, Black Prince of Wales" Hen.5 II.4.56. ¶50 CONJURE in EL.E. is a synonym of 'adjure,' cp. "I conjure thee to leave me and be gon" Err.IV.3.68. The word had stress on the first syllable. PROFESSE in EL.E. means 'make claim to know,' cp. "In what he did professe well found" All's W.II.1.105. ¶52 A similar description is found in Lear III.2.1 ff. ¶54 CONFOUND, 'ruin' and 'mingle together,' one of those graphic words with double sense so common in Shakespeare. NAVIGATION in the 17th century had the concrete meaning, 'shipping'; cp. "this kingdomes wonderous encrease of traffique and navigation" Harrison's England, II.23, and "great expense of timber for navigation"

Stowe's *Annales*, 1631, p. 1024. ¶55 BLADED: Collier and some modern editors object to "bladed" because corn 'not yet in the ear' cannot be "lodged" by storms. But "bladed" in EL.E. implies that the corn is in the green ear, cp. "those fruits of the earth that rise up to blade (straw, stal [i.e. "stale," an EL. word for 'stalk']) and bear eares" Comenius, 'Janua' 127, and "As soon as standing corn shoots up to a blade it is in danger of scath by tempests" *ibid.* 394. LODG'D, 'beaten down by the wind.' ¶57 PYRAMIDS in EL.E. described both obelisks and pyramids, and was therefore used of any spire-like structure; cp. Marlowe's *Dido*, III.1, 'The masts whereon the swelling sails shall hang, Hollow pyramids of silver plate'; cp., too, Marlowe's *Faustus*, VII.43, 'high pyramids Which Julius Cæsar brought from Africa,' and the editor's note that 'it had been rather beyond Julius Cæsar's power' to bring a pyramid from Egypt (Ward's *Old English Drama*, p. 181). Cooper glosses *pyramis* "also a steeple," and *pyramidatus*

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

"made steeple wise"; so Coles, "*pyramis*, an Egyptian building like a spire-steeple," and Holyoke, "*pyramis*, a steeple, a spire, a shaft, a broach [*i.e.* obelisk]." The word here, therefore, means 'towers,' 'spires,' or 'pinnacles,' and not the 'pyramids of Egypt.' SLOPE is a stronger word in EL.E. than now, and means 'to incline,' 'slant,' 'lean': an oblique line is defined in EL. dictionaries as 'a sloping line.' ¶ 58 HEAD, 'the summit of an eminence or erection,' N.E.D. 12. In EL.E. the word denoted also 'the capstone of a column,' N.E.D. 81. A similar figure is found in Merch.1.1.28. ¶ 59 GERMAINE, 'seeds.' Bacon speaks of the "principles or seedes of things," and Jonson has the same notion in "You . . . that know how well it [*i.e.* union] binds the fighting seeds of things" *Masques*, p. 132. Cp. also note to 1.3.58. In a note to his *Masque of Queenes*, p. 165, Jonson says these powers of troubling nature are frequently ascribed to witches, and cites Remigius: "*Qua possint evertere funditus orbem et manes superis miscere hac unica cura est.*" The same notion occurs in Lear III.2.8: "all germaines spill at once That makes ingratefull man"—cp. Lucretius's "*Celesti semine omnes sumus oriundi.*" Theobald's emendation, 'germins' (the plural form), is incorporated into the Cambridge and other MN. texts, but it rests on the same foundation as the changing of "seedes" to 'seed' in III.1.70. Shakspeare was the first to use the word in English, and no doubt felt at liberty to employ it collectively, as Delius suggests. The climax of this mass of associations—unleashed winds venting their mad fury on the churches, yeasty waves swallowing ships, storm-lodged corn, toppling castles and overturned pinnacles crashing down until ruin itself is nauseated—true children of Macbeth's poetic imagination—is aptly represented in the rhythm, a series of rising, cumulative phrases piling themselves up, one after another, without a single check in the onward flow, until the whole flood swells over its barrier in the reversal of v.60, 'x x ' x ' x'. It is an excellent illustration of the power of Shakspeare's versification, whose full force can readily be appreciated if one alters, for instance, vv. 55 ff. to 'Lodging the bladed corn, uprooting trees, Toppling their castles on the warders' heads,' etc.; any other disposition of stress than the marvellously fitting one

## ACT IV SCENE I 61–63

### FIRST WITCH

Speake.

### SECOND WITCH

Demand.

### THIRD WITCH

Wee'l answer.

### FIRST WITCH

Say if th' hadst rather heare it from our  
mouthes,  
Or from our masters?

### MACBETH

Call 'em; let me see 'em.

Shakspeare gives will rob the passage of half its power. The witches' answer, too, with its cumulative series, '|| x ' || ' ' x', is in peculiarly Shaksperian rhythm.

¶ 63 The MASTERS here are not the evil spirits sitting aloft to direct the witches as in III. 5.35, but are 'the entreated seeds and weak beginnings' of the events that are to influence Macbeth's destiny. But it is not a happy word: indeed, vv. 62 and 63 are strangely out of keeping with the context, for the First Witch's distinction is one of academic demonology, and Macbeth's prosaic "Call 'em; let me see 'em," a strange anticlimax to his pre-

ceding demand. "Thy selfe and office deaftly show" in v.68 is also a more or less artificial notion which hardly belongs in Shakspeare's demonology. It is possible, therefore, that vv. 62 to 68 are a part of the interpolated matter. The 'EM in v.63 is not so undignified in EL.E. as in MN.E., see note to II.2.13. Many modern editors alter "'em" in both cases to 'them.'



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶64 POWRE: *w* in M.E. and e.N.E. is usually written for *u* when it is the second element of a diphthong followed by a consonant; MN.E. words usually retain this spelling before *l*, e.g. 'bowl,' 'brawl.' SOWES BLOOD THAT HATH EATEN, etc., is good EL. word order: such collocations are usually avoided in MN.E. by the use of the 'of' genitive. EATEN rhymes with SWEATEN, *ea* not yet having become *i* in the former word, and the vowel not yet having been shortened in the latter. ¶65 FARROW, 'litters,' the word is a collective plural, N.E.D. 3; Steevens quotes from the laws of Kenneth in Holinshed, p. 181, "If a sowe eate her pigges let her be stoned to death and buried." Shakspeare's sow is nine times wicked. GREAZE: the word was applied in EL.E. to any fatlike substance, N.E.D. I; the intervocalic *z* is still heard.

SWEATEN is made on the analogy of a strong past participle; "have sitten down," "hunger-starven," "had lien" are similar e.N.E. forms.

¶66 In the Masque of Queenes it is the "sinew" and "hair" of a hanged murderer that are used. ¶67

HIGH OR LOW, 'great spirits or lesser spirits.' ¶68 THY SELFE AND OFFICE [*i.e.* function] DEAFPLY SHOW sounds like Act III, Scene V. DEAFPLY is MN.E. 'deftly,' with the *e* not yet shortened.

The apparitions which follow are "the hatch and brood of time," embryos of coming events. The ARMED HEAD (*i.e.* head cased in armour, see note to III.4.101) represents symbolically Macbeth's head cut off and brought to Malcolm by Macduff (V.8.53). The BLOODY CHILDE is Macduff, untimely ripped from his mother's womb (V.8.15). The CHILDE CROWNED with the bough in his hand is Malcolm, who ordered his soldiers to hew down boughs and bear them before them

to Dunsinane (Steevens's 'observation' adopted from Mr. Upton). The apparitions are misunderstood by Macbeth, who probably takes the armed head for rebellion's head, the bloody child for Macduff's murdered son, and the child with the crown on his head and the bough in his hand as the insignia of his own house, now made secure by the Dunsinane prophecy. ¶71 The rhythm is full of omen, 'x' || 'x' || 'x' || 'x' 'x' || 'x' 'x' 'x' || 'x' 'x' 'x'. ME and ENOUGH are in all probability intended to be run together; that such elision even of long vowels was a current feature of EL. verse is shown by the numerous instances of it in EL. poetry where EL. printers have set an apostrophe instead of the vowel, e.g. "Why shouldst thou hope of men to b' intertained" Poetic Miscellany of the Time of James I, ed. Halliwell, Percy Soc., p. 1; "I will not strive m' invention to inforce"

## ACT IV

## SCENE I

64-72

### FIRST WITCH

Powre in sowes blood that hath eaten  
Her nine farrow; greaze that's sweaten  
From the murderer's gibbet throw  
Into the flame.

ALL

Come high or low;  
Thy selfe and office deaftly show!

THUNDER

FIRST APPARITION: AN ARMED HEAD

MACBETH

Tell me, thou unknowne power,—

FIRST WITCH

He knowes thy thought:  
Heare his speech, but say thou nought.

FIRST APPARITION

Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! Beware  
Macduffe;  
Beware the Thane of Fife. Dismiss me.  
Enough.

HE DESCENDS

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

Drayton, 'Dedication,' Spenser Soc., p. 3; "To b'earle of March doth suddainely aspire" *ibid.*, 'Barrons Warres' VI.4.3; "I do exceed m' instructions to acquaint" Jonson's Sejanus, V.6, ed. 1640, p. 365. Such elisions were a common feature of M.E. versification, and are found all through EL. poetry. Abbott cites a number from Shakspeare,— "How came we a shore?" Temp. I.2.158, "too unkinde a cause of greefe" Merch. V.1.175, etc.,—and his list could be greatly extended. The apparition's ENOUGH is not only the last word of the armed head, but Macbeth's last word also, cp. V.8.34. HE DESCENDS is the direction for the apparition to go down through the trap-door of the stage.

## ACT IV SCENE I 73-86

### MACBETH

What ere thou art, for thy good caution,  
thanks;  
Thou hast harp'd my feare aright: but one  
word more,—

### FIRST WITCH

He will not be commanded: heere's another,  
More potent then the first.

### THUNDER

### SECOND APPARITION: A BLOODY CHILDE

### SECOND APPARITION

Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!

### MACBETH

Had I three eares, I'd heare thee.

### SECOND APPARITION

Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorne  
The powre of man, for none of woman borne  
Shall harme Macbeth.

### DESCENDS

### MACBETH

Then live, Macduffe: what need I feare of  
thee?

But yet I'le make assurance double sure,  
And take a bond of fate: thou shalt not live;  
That I may tell pale-hearted feare it lies,  
And sleepe in spight of thunder.

'require a pledge [cp. note to III.2.49] from death,' and thus have two bonds for the fulfilment of the prophecy that none shall harm Macbeth. The sense of "double" is missed by the modern reading of FATE in the sense of 'destiny'; the stress falls upon "fate," not upon "bond." ¶85 PALE-HEARTED FEARE is a haunting, ever-present person to Macbeth: to get rid of "feare," which he never knew before his meeting with the witches,

¶74 HARP'D, 'guessed,' an EL. meaning of the word illustrated in N.E.D. 7, cp. "*Parler á taston*, to speak by ghesse or conjecture, onely to harpe at the matter" Cotgrave. ¶75 Though it was a popular belief that spirits could not be commanded, there is a deep irony in the witches thus informing Macbeth that he is not king in dealing with the powers of evil: so, too, there is a hidden irony in the fact that the second apparition, Macduff, is described as MORE POTENT than the first, Macbeth. ¶79 RESOLUTE, 'res'lute,' like "absolute" in IV.3.38. ¶80 The equivocal prophecy of Macbeth's invulnerability is recorded in Holinshed (Boswell-Stone, p. 36) along with the warning against Macduff and the Dunsinane prediction. ¶82 OF, 'from,' a usual sense of the preposition. ¶83 DOUBLE, 'doubly,' N.E.D. I, cp. All's W. II.3.254 and "Those that gull us with the assurance of an extraordinarie facultie [i.e. power] . . ought to be double punished" Florio's Montaigne, I.xxx. ¶84 TAKE A BOND OF FATE,

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

has been the end of his titanic efforts all through the play. ¶86 TO SLEEPE IN SPIGHT OF THUNDER is not inapposite and disconnected as it seems to us to be, but one of those side-lights that flash out from time to time to reveal to the audience Macbeth's suffering. Dread at the approach of a thunder-storm is a symptom of insanity in 'Anat. of Mel.' I. 2. 25: 'Those which are already mad rave down right either in or against [i.e. at the approach of, cp. I. 7. 19] a tempest': see also note to II. 3. 59.

## ACT IV SCENE I 86-103

THUNDER

THIRD APPARITION: A CHILDE CROWNED  
WITH A TREE IN HIS HAND

What is this

That rises like the issue of a king,  
And weares upon his baby-brow the round  
And top of sovereignty?

ALL

Listen, but speake not too 't.

THIRD APPARITION

Be lyon metled, proud; and take no care  
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers  
are:

Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be untill  
Great Byrnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill  
Shall come against him.

DESCEND

MACBETH

That will never bee:

Who can impresse the forrest, bid the tree  
Unfixe his earth-bound root? Sweet boad-  
ments! good!

Rebellious head rise never till the wood  
Of Byrnan rise, and our high plac'd Macbeth  
Shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath  
To time and mortall custome. Yet my hart  
Throbs to know one thing: tell me, if your  
art

Can tell so much: Shall Banquo's issue ever  
Reigne in this kingdome?

¶88 ROUND, 'crown,' cp. note to I. 5. 29. ¶89 TOP is commented upon by MN. editors as an unusual poetic usage of words. Johnson explains that by "round" is meant the base of the crown and by "top" the ornament above it. But in EL.E. the word meant 'crown,' 'pitch of attainment,' see the examples in Cent. Dict. s.v. 8, and cp. "O Mustapha, the top of glorie, . . . grant us victorie" Purchas's Pilgrimage, v. 311, and "to the spire and top of prayes vouched" Cor.I.9. 24. TOO'T, cp. I. 2. 7. ¶91 ARE rhymes with CARE, see note to III. 5. 2. ¶93 BYRNAM WOOD is twelve miles W.N.W. of Dunsinane. DUNSINANE: FO.I has "Dunsmane," apparently an overlooked printer's error of *m* for *n*. Both "Dunsinane" (corresponding to the MN. Scotch accentuation) and "Dunsinane" occur in Wyntown as well as in Shakspeare (noted by Steevens). The latter form Slatyer syncopates to Dunsinane in "Till Dunsinane castell, high in th' ayre," which he makes *Dusitana cacumine montis*, probably '*metri gratia*,' though he may have intended 'Dunstana.' ¶95 IMPRESSE, 'force to serve as soldiers,' due to the "come against" above. ¶96 BOADMENTS, 'predictions,' N.E.D.I. ¶97 REBELLIOUS HEAD: FO. I has "rebellious dead": Theobald emended this to 'Rebellion's head,' which the Cambridge



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

Text and other MN. editions incorporate. But there is no warrant for assuming anything further than a mistake of *d* for *h* (the letters were contiguous in the EL. type-case, *d* being above and to the left of *h*). HEAD in EL.E. means 'a body of people gathered together,' N.E.D. 30, cp. "That Dowglas and the English rebels met, . . A mightie and a fearefull head they are" 1 Hen.4 III.2.165. "Rebellious head," therefore, refers to the populace rising in rebellion under Macduff's leadership, as Macbeth interprets the armed head to foretell. This second reading, 'rebellious head,' is likewise a conjecture of Theobald's. The whole thought is conditional, RISE being tantamount to a subjunctive, 'if no rebellious head shall rise,' etc. MN. editors change the punctuation of the Folio, adding a comma after NEVER to make the construction imperative. ¶ 98 BYRNAN is a variant form of Birnam, and not a printer's error as MN. editors assume. Holinshed has "the wood of Bernane"; Slatyer's Palæal-bion, p.288, "*Byrnanæ silvæ*," which he renders in English "woods of Weyre"; Wyntown gives the form "Brynnane." OUR has been found fault with as coming from Macbeth himself, and variously emended to 'your,' 'now,' and 'old.' But Macbeth thinks of himself objectively as one whom he and the weird sisters—he has already hinted at the community of interest in his "sweet boadments"—are backing in a game against fate and death. HIGH PLAC'D is a palpable reference to his castle on "high Dunsinane hill," and not to Macbeth's sovereignty. ¶ 99 LEASE OF NATURE, i.e. lease of life, the same notion as Lady Macbeth's in "nature's coppie" III.2.38. BREATH, 'life,' 'spirit,' still used in 'breath of life'; cp. "Whan with honour up yolden ['yielded'] is his breeth" Chaucer, Cant. Tales, A 3052, and Wesley's Psalms, "He guards our souls, he keeps our breath" (cited in N.E.D.). ¶ 100

## ACT IV SCENE I 103-111

ALL

Seeke to know no more.

MACBETH

I will be satisfied: deny me this,  
And an eternall curse fall on you! Let me  
know!

Why sinkes that caldron? and what noise is  
this?

HOBOYES

FIRST WITCH

Shew!

SECOND WITCH

Shew!

THIRD WITCH

Shew!

ALL

Shew his eyes, and greeve his hart;  
Come like shadowes, so depart!

in EL.E. was applied to music as well as to inharmonious sound, cp. "the isle is full of noyses, Sounds and sweet aires that give delight and hurt not" Temp. III.2.144. The

TIME, i.e. Time the destroyer.

MORTALL CUSTOME, 'the custom of mortality,' 'the universal due of death,' an instance of Shakspeare's marvellous power in bringing together poetic associations. YET, 'still,' in its usual EL. position at the beginning of the sentence: 'my heart still throbs.' HART is a common EL. spelling of 'heart,' see N.E.D. s.v. ¶ 102 EVER is probably intended to be read as 'e'er,' and the verse to close with a rising impulse.

¶ 104 SATISFIED is used in its EL. sense of 'having full knowledge'; Macbeth will know for a certainty the whole future. His imperiousness and uncertain temper come out in "an eternall curse fall on you!" ¶ 106 The sinking caldron is Shakspeare's way of showing that the witch-scene is such stuff as dreams are made of. WHAT, 'what kind of,' cp. I.3.39. NOISE

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

HOBOYES are behind the scenes, and the music is of the sort that accompanies the incantation scenes in Middleton's *Witch*. ¶ 107 The triple SHEW is like the triple "haile" in I. 3. 62 ff. The word is the normal historical form; 'show' is due to a M.E. change of stress incidence in the diphthong. It is probably used here in the sense of 'let him know,' as in II. 1. 21.

The following stage direction reads in FO. 1 "A shew of eight kings and Banquo last with a glasse in his hand." But Banquo is not one of the eight kings, and in v. 119 it is the eighth king and not Banquo who bears the glass. The FO.'S stage direction has been variously emended. The Cambridge text reads 'A shew of eight kings, the last with a glass in his hand: Banquo's ghost following.' But if we punctuate "A shew of eight kings and Banquo: the last with a glasse in his hand," adding only the definite article, the stage direction becomes clear. In EL. E. "last" means 'rearmost,' N. E. D. I e, and the error may have arisen through the FO. editor understanding it in the sense of 'last-mentioned' and referring it to Banquo. Shakspeare follows the Macbeth tradition of Holinshed, connecting Banquo with James I of England: "But here I thinke it shall not much make against my purpose if (according to th' order which I find observed in the Scottish historie) I shall in few words rehearse the originall line of those kings which have descended from the fore-said Banquo. . . Fleance, therefore, (as before is said) fled into Wales," and had by the daughter of the King of Wales (cp. note to III. 3. 18) "a sonne named Walter." The king slew Fleance. Fleance's son, "falling out with one of his companions" who "to his reproch objected that he was a bastard, . . ran upon him and slue him. Then was he glad to flee out of Wales, and coming into Scotland . . within a while was highly esteemed of them." Having put down a rebellion in "the Westernne Isles," "upon his returne to court he was made lord steward of Scotland." One of his descendants, Walter Steward, married Marjorie Bruce, daughter to King Robert Bruce, "by whom he had issue King Robert the Second of that name."

This is the first of the "eight kings"; Robert III, his son, was the second. Holinshed then carries the line down through James I, James II, James III, James IV, James V, all of Scotland, to "Charles James, now king of Scotland," i.e. James VI of Scotland in 1577 (quoted from Collier's *Holinshed*: the passage is not given in Boswell-Stone). Slatyer gives substantially the same genealogy. SHEW in EL. E. is the normal word to describe a pageant or procession like this, and is still retained in this sense in the 'Lord Mayor's Show.' ¶ 112 SPIRIT, a monosyllable. ¶ 113 HAIRE is undoubtedly the right word,

## ACT IV

## SCENE I

112-118

A SHEW OF EIGHT KINGS AND BANQUO:  
THE LAST WITH A GLASSE IN HIS HAND

### MACBETH

Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo; down!  
Thy crowne does seare mine eye-bals. And  
thy haire,

Thou other gold-bound-brow, is like the first.  
A third is like the former. Filthy haggles!  
Why do you shew me this? A fourth! Start,  
eyes!

What, will the line stretch out to th' cracke  
of doome?

Another yet! A seaventh! I'll see no more:

and not 'air' or 'heir,' as modern editors have emended. Shakspeare, it must be remembered, is paying a compliment to the royal race of James. Tradition represents Robert III as a man of "goodly and comely personage," and it is Robert III that occupies the second place in this series if the kings appear in chronological succession, as seems to be intended from v. 119. If, on the other hand, Macbeth sees the present of Shakspeare's

*Handwritten notes:*  
Banquo's head

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

day stretching to the past of his own time, James VI is the first and the second is James V, of whose splendid hair Ronsard wrote :

"Ce Roy D'Escosse estoit en la fleur de ses ans :  
Ses cheveux non tondus comme fin or luisans,  
Cordonnez et crespez, flotans dessus sa face  
Et sur son col de laict, luy donnoit bonne grace."

¶ 114 OTHER often means 'second' in M.E., and seems to be used in that sense here.  
¶ 115 FORMER in E.L.E. meant not only 'preceding' but 'the immediately preceding one in a series,' N.E.D. 2a. ¶ 116 A FOURTH is followed by an interrogation-point in FO. I. START, i.e. start from your spheres, cp. Ham. 1.5.17. ¶ 117 CRACKE in E.L.E. denoted any loud noise, the blare of a trumpet as well as the crash of thunder, N.E.D. 1. It is probably the former signification that gives us the phrase 'crack of doom,' though the latter may have entered into it; for it is the 'judgement blast'—"Omnes resurgent in momento in ictu oculi in novissima tuba"—rather than the 'mighty earthquake' that the English mind has seized on to suggest the Day of Judgement. ¶ 118 SEAVENTH shows an E.L. spelling of long open e still retained in 'heaven,' 'head,' etc. Macbeth's "I'll see no more" is pathetic evidence of his constant effort to shut his eyes to the 'consequence.'

## ACT IV SCENE I 119-124

And yet the eight appeares, who beares a  
glasse  
Which shewes me many more; and some I  
see  
That two-fold balles and trebble scepters  
carry:  
Horrible sight! Now, I see, 't is true;  
For the blood-bolter'd Banquo smiles upon  
me, *my mother*  
And points at them for his.

### APPARITIONS VANISH

cleare glasses" (cited in N.E.D.); cp. also Gifford, p. 48, "Is it an angell from heaven or the soule of some man that is dead which appeareth in the christall or in the glasse?" and p. 54, "There is ado to get him [i.e. Satan] into the glasse," and p. 58, "For what though the witch suppose it is the soule of Moses which appeareth in the christall, is he not therefore a witch?" ¶ 121 BALLEs, i.e. the golden orb borne together with the sceptre as the emblem of sovereignty, N.E.D. 3. Shakspeare's epithet TWO-FOLD seems to be a reference to the double crowning of James at Scone and at Westminster. The TREBBLE SCEPTERS, however, does not necessarily contain a reference to the sovereignty of England, Scotland, and Ireland. The coin of James I which celebrates the union bears the inscription "*Jacobus D. G. Mag. Brit. Fran. & Hib. Rex,*" a style commemorating the 'triple' kingdom of Great Britain, France, and Ireland after it had ceased to be a reality. From these references it has been inferred that Macbeth was written after October 24, 1604; but the lines might have been inserted by Shakspeare at any time out of compliment to the sovereign. ¶ 123 BLOOD-BOLTER'D, 'having hair matted with blood.' The normal forms of the word are "baltered," "baultered," cp. N.E.D. s.v. 'balter'; "bolstered" in

¶ 119 EIGHT, "sixt," and "fift" are the M. E. and e. N. E. forms of these ordinals, which, since Shakspeare's day, have been given their *th* by analogy with 'fourth,' 'seventh,' 'ninth,' etc. The GLASSE, as Steevens pointed out, is a reference to the magic mirror which represented future events, a method of divination still practised on the credulous, cp. N.E.D. 1. Scot, in his Discovery of Witchcraft, enumerates the "regular, the irregular, the coloured and



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

'Arden of Feversham' III. I. 73 seems to be the same word incorrectly spelled. The o is probably a phonetic spelling, and the word in MN.E. should rhyme with 'falter'; 'bodkin' and 'bawdkin' are similar doublet forms of the seventeenth century. It is not 'a Warwickshire dialect word in Shakspeare's time,' as editors are fond of assuming, but occurs in Holland's Pliny, 1601, XII, xxii, p. 370 (cited by Steevens), and in Phr. Gen. "to baulter ones hair, *complicare crines*" (cited in N.E.D.). ¶ 124 HIS is here used in the EL. sense of 'his descendants,' cp. note to I. 6. 26.

## ACT IV SCENE I 124-132

† What, is this so?

### FIRST WITCH

¶ 124 WHAT, IS THIS SO? down to the stage direction, which in its original form was probably 'Witches vanish' as in I. 3. 78, is so palpably unShaksperian that even the consensus of modern editors has admitted its spuriousness. The rising four-wave rhythm, Macbeth's stupid question, the stress "Mácbeth," the artificial and mechanical representation of the relation of the witches to Macbeth, all point unmistakably to the writer of III. 5.

¶ 126 STANDS, 'stands still.' AMAZEDLY, 'in consternation,' cp. N.E.D. s.v. and Mids. IV. I. 151. ¶ 127 SPRIGHTS, a common EL. form of 'spirits.' ¶ 129 SOUND has in M.E. and EL.E. the sense of 'humming,' 'murmuring,' 'rustling,' like the 'sound of bees,' the 'sound of waters,' the 'sound of the leaves in the wind.' This specific sense was already merging into the general one in EL.E., but Shakspeare makes a beautiful use of it, playing on its identity of form with "sound," 'to swoon,' and probably thinking of the notion 'sound of many waters,' associated with swooning, in Tw.N. I. 1. 4: "That straine agen, it had a dying fall [the EL. musical term for 'cadence,' but suggesting 'swoon,' and so leading to the next figure]; O, it came ore my eare like the sweet sound [murmur of rustling leaves] That breathes [often used of light, hovering winds in EL.E.] upon a bank of violets, Stealing and giving odour"—a group of associations whose beauty is quite lost when the words are read as MN.E. ¶ 130 ANTIQUE as applied to EL. dancing is illustrated by a citation from Ascham in N.E.D.: "To go on a man his [i.e. man's] tip-toes, stretch out th' one of his armes forward, the other backward, which, if he blered out his tunge [i.e. protruded the tongue in mockery] also, myght be thought to daunce anticke verie properlye [is one of the 'pastimes' unfit for scholars]"; cp. also L.L.L. V. I. 119. In Ben Jonson's Masque of Queenes, p. 171, the witches' incantation closes thus: "At which, with a strange and sudden musique, they fell into a magicall dance [in a note appended Jonson cites classic authorities for these 'antique rounds'] full of præposterous change and gesticulation, but most applying to their propertie: who at their meetings doe all things contrary to the custome of men, dancing backe to backe and hip to hip, their hands joyned and making their circles backward to the left hand, with strange phantastick motions of their heads and bodies." ¶ 132 PAY, 'reward,' a common EL. meaning of the word. Their "antique round" is a return for Macbeth's kindly welcome.

MUSICKE

THE WITCHES DANCE AND VANISH†

¶ 133 WHERE ARE THEY? probably originally finished v. 124, having been displaced by 'What, is this so?' The verse division of FO. I is Where . . gone, Let . . houre, Stand . . kalen-

no free noises ○ Death 7 after

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

ACT IV SCENE I 133-147

MACBETH

Where are they? Gone? Let this pernicious  
houre

Stand aye accursed in the kalender!

Come in, without there!

ENTER LENOX

LENOX

What's your graces will?

MACBETH

Saw you the weyward sisters?

LENOX

No, my lord.

MACBETH

Came they not by you?

LENOX

No, indeed, my lord.

MACBETH

Infected be the ayre whereon they ride;  
And damn'd all those that trust them! I did  
heare

The gallopping of horse: who was't came  
by?

LENOX

'Tis two or three, my lord, that bring you  
word

Macduff is fled to England.

MACBETH

Fled to England?

LENOX

I, my good lord.

MACBETH

ASIDE

Time, thou anticipat'st my dread exploits:  
The flighty purpose never is o're-tooke  
Unlesse the deed go with it: from this moment  
The very firstlings of my heart shall be

der, Come . . there. It is possible that Let . . accursed, I'th' kalender . . there, were intended for two verses. But the division of the Cambridge text is here followed because it fits in with the interpolated matter. ¶ 133, 134 HOURE.. ACCURSED: Shakspeare may have had in mind a '*dies maledictus*' or '*dies Ægypticus*,' 'on which nothing must be begun, for it will turn out ill,' a day which 'is affirmed to lead the unwary to the shades of death': see Du Cange's Glossarium, s.v. *dies Ægyptici*. ¶ 134 KALENDER is an EL. spelling, probably due to an imitation of the Greek form 'kalends': the word itself is from the O. FR. ¶ 135 COME IN, etc.: see introductory note to the scene. ¶ 139 A pathetic anticipation of Macbeth's own doom. ¶ 140 HORSE is plural, cp. note to II.4.14. ¶ 144 ANTICIPATE is still used in the sense of 'prevent,' 'forestall,' see N. E. D. 3. EXPLOIT, 'act' or 'deed,' but in EL. E. not necessarily implying skill. Shakspeare probably intended also the legal meaning, 'citation,' 'summons,' which the word had in EL. E.,—see N. E. D. 5,—and Macbeth is thinking of his citation of Macduff to answer for his 'contempt.' ¶ 145 FLIGHTY means 'fleet,' 'swift,' N. E. D. I. O'RE-TOOKE, 'overtaken,' a common form of the past participle. ¶ 146 THE DEED, 'its execution,' cp. II.2.33. GO is probably used here in its sense of 'start,' N. E. D. 22; the figure is that of two runners making for a goal, the purpose and act together 'from the word go.' ¶ 147 FIRSTLINGS, 'the first of

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

their kind,' N. E. D. I. The HEART was supposed to be the seat of the will in EL. psychology. Macbeth reflects this psychology in II. 3. 123 when he makes the heart the fountain of courage.

¶ 149 BE IT, probably 'be't.'  
 ¶ 152 UNFORTUNATE was subject to syncope in EL. E., 'unfort'nate,' the *u* not having developed to a diphthong. Such EL. spellings as "forten" show this clearly. ¶ 153 TRACE, 'follow,' a common meaning of the word, cp. "Can trace me in the tedious wayes of art" I Hen. 4 III. 1. 48. NOBOASTING LIKE A FOOLE: EL. syntax by which subject and predicate are implied, 'I will

make,' etc., see note to III. 4. 31. ¶ 155 SIGHTS is a common EL. word for 'portents,' 'visions,' cp. Cæs. 1. 3. 138 and *ibid.* II. 2. 16. Macbeth refers to Banquo's ghost as a "sight" in III. 4. 114 and IV. 1. 122. Here, however, it has probably the sense which Cooper gives it, "*spectaculum*, a sight, a pageant," or, as Holyoke glosses, "a sight or shew, *spectaculum*." Macbeth refers to the "shew of eight kings." Notwithstanding this, some modern editors will have Macbeth say 'no more flights'; others, 'no more sprights.' Macbeth carries out his determination to have no more to do with the witches, and from this point forth we have a man striving to free himself by main force from the entanglements of evil in which he is involved. The vision of Banquo's royal line has cured him of his desire to penetrate the secrets of the future, though he still believes in the prediction of the witches and depends upon its fulfilment. His disillusionment, which is summated in V. 8. 17, thus begins here.

## ACT IV SCENE I 148-156

The firstlings of my hand. And even now,  
 To crown my thoughts with acts, be it  
 thought and done:

The castle of Macduff I will surprize;  
 Seize upon Fife; give to th' edge o' th' sword  
 His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate soules  
 That trace him in his line. No boasting like  
 a foole;

This deed I 'le do before this purpose coole.  
 But no more sights!

TO LENOX

Where are these gentlemen?

Come, bring me where they are.

EXEUNT

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SCENE II

Of the scene that follows the dialogue between Lady Macduff and her son, vv. 30-64, is omitted in Davenant's version of the play, and Rosse's farewell words, "Heaven protect you," follow "to what they were before," v. 25. The murder scene, vv. 79-85, is likewise omitted. Parts of these passages certainly do not sound like Shakspeare, who would scarcely represent a childish prattler as asking his mother what she would do for a husband if his father were dead, and telling her if she did not weep for him it would be a good sign that he should quickly have a new father. 'Pure pathos,' or no pathos, such a situation is grotesque and could hardly have been written by one who imagined the scene between Arthur and Herbert. To construe the dialogue as an interlude, as was the porter scene above, does not help matters. The Rabelaisian humor of the half-awake, half-sober porter moralizing on the effect of drink the morning after is something quite different from the far-fetched wit of Macduff's son prattling to his mother in the terms of conventional jests about marriage. The one is redolent of humanity—of a coarse sort, it is true,



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

but that big, out-of-doors humanity that Shakspeare gives us in Falstaff. This latter smacks of the drawing-room. Moreover, the murder of a child in cold blood upon the stage in broad daylight in full sight of the audience is hardly of a piece with Shakspeare's dramatic art. The verses at the end of Scene I seem to have been written with the purpose of making such representation unnecessary. To represent the murder of Banquo by cutthroats in the gloom of a night attack is an altogether different matter. To reject the passages, however, on these æsthetic grounds is, perhaps, unwarranted in the lack of any other evidence pointing to their spuriousness. But we must conclude that if these passages were a part of Macbeth, "*dormitat Homerus*," and Davenant's critical judgment which omitted them was a sound one.

## SCENE II: FIFE: MACDUFFES CASTLE

ENTER MACDUFFES WIFE HER SON AND ROSSE

WIFE

I - 14



HAT had he done, to make him  
fly the land?

ROSSE

You must have patience, madam.

WIFE

He had none:

His flight was madnesse: when our actions  
do not,

Our feares do make us traitors.

ROSSE

You know not

Whether it was his wisdom or his feare.

WIFE

Wisdom! to leave his wife, to leave his  
babes,

His mansion and his titles in a place

From whence himselfe do's flye? He loves  
us not;

He wants the naturall touch: for the poore  
wren,

The most diminitive of birds, will fight,

Her yong ones in her nest, against the owle.

All is the feare and nothing is the love;

As little is the wisdom, where the flight

So runnes against all reason.

¶ 4 MAKE, 'represent to be,' cp. "make it Naturall rebellion, done i'th' blade [i.e. 'greenness,' 'freshness,' N. E. D. 2 b. The word is altered in modern editions to 'blaze.'] of youth" All's W. V. 3. 5, and "Your vertue is [i.e. consists in] To make him worthy, whose offence subdues him" Cor. 1. 1. 178. MN. E. generally adds 'out' to 'make' when this sense is intended. ¶ 6 LEAVE, 'abandon': "in" goes with "place," not with "leave."

¶ 7 TITLES: Cowel's definition is "*titula est iusta causa possidendi quod nostrum est*" (title is the legal ground for possessing what is our own). The word also means 'claim' in EL. E.,—cp. IV. 3. 34,—and was transferred to 'the record of claim' so that it corresponded to MN. E. 'title-deed'; cp. "title; writings or records to prove one's right" Kersey. This is the meaning here, and not 'possessions' as it is usually explained. The citations supporting this last meaning are wrongly interpreted in Schmidt, as is "time enough to heare . . . passages Of his

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

true titles [i.e. valid title-deeds] to some certaine Dukedomes" Hen.5 I.1.84. ¶8 HIMSELFE, 'he himself,' cp. note to III.1.5. ¶9 NATURALL TOUCH, 'natural sympathy,' 'humanity'; EL.E. "touch" alone sometimes corresponds to MN.E. 'sympathy,' cp. "Hast thou . . . a touch, a feeling Of their afflictions" Temp. V.1.21, and "touch; feeling" Kersey. ¶12 ALL, 'everything,' cp. note to II. 3.99.

## ACT IV

## SCENE II

14-26

ROSSE

¶14 COOZ: in this abbreviated form of 'cousin,' 'cozen,' the vowel  $\bar{u}$  in EL.E. was evidently not yet shortened to  $\text{ə}$  as in MN.E., hence the spelling (oo= $\bar{u}$ ). ¶15 SCHOOLE YOUR SELFE in MN.E. usually takes a complement, 'to.' It was used absolutely in EL.E. and meant 'find fault with,' 'reprove,' cp. "Well, I am school'd" I Hen.4 III.1.190. The stress is on "your selfe," 'find fault with yourself, not with your husband.' FOR: the corresponding MN.E. idiom is 'as for your husband.' ¶17 FITS, cp. note to III.2.22. A similar expression occurs in Cor. III.2.33, "The violent fit o' th'time." ¶19 KNOW OUR SELVES, 'become acquainted with one another'; this obsolete sense of "know" is illustrated in N.E.D. s.v.6 by a citation from Halle's Chronicle, "[he] cursed the time that ever he knewe Doctor Barnes," and is found also in I Hen.4 IV.3.74, "He presently, as greatnesse knows it selfe, Steps me [EL. ethical dative] a little higher then his vow." As has already been pointed out in the note to III.4.32, OUR SELVES is sometimes used reciprocally in EL.E., corresponding to MN.E. 'one another.' This is the simplest explanation of Rosse's words, which vividly demonstrate the effectiveness of Macbeth's espionage. HOLD RUMOR: the explanations of these words are numerous. That "hold" is used in the sense of 'accept,' 'receive,' 'believe to be true' is the commonest explanation. But while 'hold opinion,' 'hold belief,' etc., are idiomatic locutions in English, "hold rumor" is not so illustrated in N.E.D., and "I finde the people strangely fantasied, Possest with rumors, full of idle dreames, Not knowing what they feare, but full of feare" John IV.2.144, seems to be a different idiom. A rumour may 'hold for true,' also, but one may not "hold rumor." But, admitting this unusual locution, it fits but illy with "from what we feare." HOLD FROM in EL.E. means 'restrain,' cp. "so they would hold their fingers from him," cited in N.E.D. s.v. II, and MN.E. 'hold your noise.' We have already had this meaning in III.2.54. ¶20 FEARE may mean 'fear is true,' 'fear is the case,' cp. "See what a ready tongue suspition hath: He that but feares the thing he would not know Hath by instinct knowledge from other's eyes That what he fear'd is chanc'd" 2 Hen.4

My deerest cooz,  
I pray you schoole your selfe: but for your husband,  
He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knowes  
The fits o' th' season. I dare not speake much further:  
But cruell are the times, when we are traitors  
And do not know our selves; when we hold rumor  
From what we feare, yet know not what we feare,  
But floate upon a wilde and violent sea  
Each way and move. I take my leave of you:  
Shall not be long but I 'le be heere againe:  
Things at the worst will cease, or else climbe upward  
To what they were before. My pretty cosine,  
Blessing upon you!

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

I.1.84. We thus get from Rosse's words a picture of loyal but unavailing efforts to keep rumour still in regard to the murders of Duncan and Banquo. His thought passes into a general expression of uncertainty: 'they float rudderless, tossed on a violent sea.' ¶21 FLOATE is obsolete in this sense of moving to and fro, cp. "Let the instrument rest until the water has done floating" James, cited in N.E.D. 4. ¶22 EACH WAY AND MOVE: Davenant could make nothing of these words, writing in their stead 'Each way and more, I take my leave of you.' Nor have later editors been more successful. The emendations are numerous: 'Each way, and move' Johnson, 'And move each way' Capell, 'And each way move' Steevens, etc., 'Which way we move' Ingleby, 'Each sway and move' Staunton, 'Each way and none' Cl. Pr., etc., etc.—*quot homines tot sententiæ*. But all these editors have ignored the fact that "move" in E.L.E. means 'to toss,' or, when used in a reflexive sense, 'to toss (one's self)': we have Cooper glossing *ago* "to move or wagge"; *jactare*, "to move or wagge"; "*assiliunt imi fluctus e gurgite ponti*, the waves were moved high from the bottom of the sea"; "*Juna freta torquet*, Juno moves or tosses the seas"; so "the floods being greatly moved make a hideous noise"; and Coles, "moved (tossed), *exagitatus*"; Holyoke, "to move or wag, *jacto*"; "*Jacto*, to throw often, to throw, cast, wag, shake, or move." Cooper's gloss "*Jactare se*, to bestirre himselfe and move now this way now that way" illustrates the reflexive sense of the word; cp., too, "*in toto corpus jactare cubili*, to tosse and remooove often to and fro in his bedde." So, too,

## ACT IV SCENE II 27–30

WIFE

Father'd he is, and yet hee's father-lesse.

ROSSE

I am so much a foole, should I stay longer,  
It would be my disgrace and your discomfort:  
I take my leave at once.

EXIT ROSSE

e.N.E.; cp. "I go beyond each other night" Heywood's *Thyestes*, Sp. Soc., I, p. 74; so "each where" corresponds to 'everywhere' in Newton's *Thebais*, Sp. Soc., I, p. 110. Shakspeare's words as they stand in FO. I may therefore mean 'float every way, and toss to and fro.' There is a post-positive use of AND in M.E. and e.N.E. which is so awkward to modern ears that dictionary readers assume it to be a mistake and do not note it. A good M.E. instance is found in the Prohemium to a version of '*Palladius de re rustica*,' written about 1440, "So sende he me sense and science Of my balade away to rade [*i.e.* erase] errorr, Pallade and do [*i.e.* translate *Palladius*] to glad his excellence." An e.N.E. instance occurs in Drayton, "For twenty years and have I serv'd in Fraunce . . and have I seene Vernoylas batfull fields . . through all my life these perills have I passed, and now to feare a banishment at last?" Heroicall Epistles, Sp. Soc., p. 288. But this idiom is perhaps too infrequent to assume it here. Another possibility is that "each way and move" was an after insertion written in the margin, with a caret in the text pointing it to a place before "upon . . sea," but by mistake inserted after it. Such displacements are not infrequent in MSS. "But floate upon a wilde and violent sea" if expanded to "But floate each way and move ['toss'] upon a wilde and violent sea. I take my leave of you" makes clear sense and good rhythm. ¶23 SHALL: the omission of the subject when it can be supplied from the context is a common idiom of M.E. and e.N.E. frequently occurring in E.L.E., cp. "Then as carefull he was what to doo himselfe: at length [*sc. he*] determined never to leave seeking him" Sidney's *Arcadia*, Sommer repr., p. 41, and "And

Florio in translating Montaigne, I.4, "So seemes it that the soule, moved and tossed, if she have not some hold to take loseth itself." There can be little doubt, therefore, that "move" in Shakspeare's verses means 'are tossed about,' 'tossed to and fro,' and that it is just the word the context requires. EACH WAY means 'in every direction,' for 'each' often means 'every' in M.E. and



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

thereto [sc. I] will not disagree in nothing that you say But [sc. I] will content your mind truly in all things that I may" 'Handefull of Pleasant Delites' p. 5. BUT I'LE BE, 'until I will be.' Rosse, of course, is leaving to join the rebels. ¶ 24 THINGS AT THE WORST, etc., seems to have been a proverbial saying based upon the notion of fortune's revolving wheel so common in mediæval literature, cp. "When bale is hext boote is next," i.e. when misfortune is highest remedy is highest, Heywood, Sp. Soc., p. 170. ¶ 29 DISCOMFORT seems here to have its EL. meaning of 'undoing' as well as 'inconvenience.'

¶ 30 SIRRA was used in speaking to young people as well as to inferiors, cp. "But, sirrah, what said he to it" *Wellbred to Knowell* in 'Every Man in his Humour' III. I. ¶ 32 WITH, 'by means of,' 'on,' cp. "I live with bread" Rich. 2 III. 2. 175. FLYES in EL. E. is used of all winged insects and is not restricted to the family *Muscidæ*, cp. N. E. D. I. ¶ 35 PITFALL, GIN: cp. "the fowler . . entangleth them [i.e. "little birds"] with lime twigs which he sets forth on a pole or perch, or snareth them in the noozes of a springe, a pitfall, or gins" Comenius's *Janua*, cap. 39. Minsheu describes a pitfall thus: "*est fouea in quam dididunt aues ancipiter impendentis inescato ligno*." A GIN is any sort of trap in EL. E. ¶ 36 The stress falls, of course, on POORE as mentally contrasted with 'rich,' the verse having an extra syllable before the cæsura. Delius takes THEY as the repeated pronominal subject so common in EL. E., 'Poor birds are not trapped,'—to SET in EL. E. may mean 'to catch birds in a net,' see Cent. Dict. II. 7,—but to take "they" as referring to pitfalls and gins gives a simpler sense. ¶ 38, 39, 40, 41 The fact that these

## ACT IV SCENE II 30-43

WIFE

Sirra, your father's dead:  
And what will you do now? How will you live?

SON

As birds do, mother.

WIFE

What, with wormes and flyes?

SON

With what I get, I meane; and so do they.

WIFE

Poore bird! Thou'dst never feare the net  
nor lime,  
The pitfall nor the gin.

SON

Why should I, mother? Poore birds they are  
not set for.

My father is not dead, for all your saying.

WIFE

†Yes, he is dead: how wilt thou do for a father?

SON

Nay, how will you do for a husband?

WIFE

Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

SON

Then you'l by 'em to sell againe.†

WIFE

Thou speak'st withall thy wit; and yet,  
i' faith

With wit enough for thee.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

ACT IV

SCENE II

44-64

† SON

Was my father a traitor, mother?

WIFE

I, that he was.

SON

What is a traitor?

WIFE

Why, one that sweares and lyes.

SON

And be all traitors that do so?

WIFE

Every one that does so is a traitor, and must be hang'd.

SON

And must they all be hang'd that swear and lye?

WIFE

Every one.

SON

Who must hang them?

WIFE

Why, the honest men.

SON

Then the liars and swearers are fools, for there are lyars and swearers enow to beate the honest men and hang up them.

WIFE

Now, God helpe thee, poore monkie! But how wilt thou do for a father?

SON

If he were dead, you'd weepe for him: if you would not, it were a good signe that I should quickly have a new father.

WIFE

Poore pratler, how thou talk'st!†

lines are in prose and vv. 42, 43 blank verse again, followed by prose as far as v. 64, may be construed as evidence that only the blank verse of this passage is Shakspeare's, Lady Macduff's words in vv. 42, 43 having originally followed after v. 37 and closed the dialogue. Such a conception of the passage as the omission of its prose parts would give us adds pathos to the murder of Macduff's lady and her son—the wren and her young one in the nest—and yet does not conflict with Shakspeare's known method of treatment. The action loses nothing by the excision, and the interest gains enormously, for nothing so mars a work of art as the inhuman touch, and nothing so clearly exhibits lack of humanity as distortion in the representation of childhood. ¶ 41 SELL seems to have had a punning sense of 'deceive,' 'betray,' cp. "*Som.* Whether were you sent? *Lucy.* Whether my lord? from bought and sold Lord Talbot" 1 Hen. 6 IV. 4. 12. ¶ 42 WIT, 'understanding,' 'intelligence,' cp. "With all my wits" Hen. 5 V. 2. 25.

¶ 47 SWEARES and LYES are used in their EL. senses of 'swears allegiance' and 'betrays,' cp. "I'llle swear my selfe thy subject" Temp. II. 2. 156. ¶ 48 BE: this I. M. E. form of the third person plural indicative of the substantive verb was of common occurrence in E. N. E., and not restricted to poetic or archaic forms of expression as it is now. ¶ 57 ENOW, plural of 'enough,' cp. v. 43. ¶ 58 HANG UP THEM: in M. N. E. the adverb usually follows the

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

pronominal object in such construction: in EL.E. it may follow the verb, cp. "they all lock up themselves a 'late'" Jonson, 'Sejanus,' 1640, p. 335, and "Go thou to Juliet, helpe to decke up her" Rom.&Jul. IV.2.41. ¶59 MONKIE is still a term of endearment applied to children. "Pug," another EL. word for monkey, was applied in the same sense.

## ACT IV

## SCENE II

65-79

ENTER A MESSENGER

MESSENGER

Blesse you, faire dame! I am not to you known,

Though in your state of honor I am perfect. I doubt some danger does approach you neerely:

If you will take a homely man's advice, Be not found heere; hence, with your little ones.

To fright you thus, me thinkes, I am too savage;

To do worse to you were fell cruelty, Which is too nie your person. Heaven pre-serve you!

I dare abide no longer.

EXIT MESSENGER

WIFE

Whether should I flye?

I have done no harme. But I remember now I am in this earthly world; where to do harme Is often laudable, to do good sometime Accounted dangerous folly: why then, alas! Do I put up that womanly defence, To say I have done no harme?

The MESSENGER is a dramatic device to represent Macbeth's murderous net closing around Lady Macduff. ¶66 STATE OF HONOR, 'rank'; "estate" and "state" are practically the same words in EL.E.: Cooper, Thomas, and Holyoke all gloss *gradus* as "a degree or estate of honor." PERFECT, 'familiar with,' cp. note to 1.5.2, and "that pretty Welsh . . . I am too perfectin" 1 Hen.4 III.1.201, and "I am perfit [another form of the word] In theis notes you gave mee" Massinger's Believe as you List, I.1. ¶67 DOUBT, 'fear,' a common EL. sense of "doubt," cp. N.E.D. 5. ¶68 HOMELY, 'simple,' 'plain,' 'humble,' N.E.D. 4 b. ¶69 LITTLE ONES: Rosse in IV.3.204 as well as Macbeth in IV.1.152 speaks of Macduff's "babes," which is slightly inconsistent with the part of this scene which represents only the murder of Lady Macduff's son. ¶70 TO FRIGHT, 'in frightening,' the EL. use of the infinitive where MN.E. requires the participial phrase. ME THINKES originally in M.E. means 'it seems to me.' SAVAGE, 'brutal,' a prominent meaning of the word in e.N.E., cp. "those pampred animalis That rage in savage sensualitie" Ado IV.1.61. ¶71 TO DO WORSE, etc., i.e. to do more than frighten. FELL is a stronger word in EL. E. than now, and means 'savage,' 'murderous,' cp. N.E.D. 1. ¶73 WHETHER is a M.E. form of 'whither' not yet obsolete in Shakspeare's time, cp. "Whether in this sense [i.e. to what place] is most usually written 'whither.' But that distinction in writing and printing is not always strictly observed. . . Mr. Butler writes it 'whether' for 'whither,' and so 'hether,' 'thether,'" etc., etc., Phr. Gen. The word has a contracted form "wher" in EL.E., but it is not necessary to assume it here, for six-wave verses such as this are common in Shakspeare. SHOULD I, 'am I to,' a common e.N.E. sense of the auxiliary. In the face of danger the first thought that naturally occurs to



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

Lady Macduff is her helplessness—she has no refuge; then she asks herself, ‘Why should I try to escape? I have done no harm’—a perfectly normal succession of ideas. But even if ‘the context requires why,’ as some modern editors think, no alteration is necessary, since “whether” may introduce a simple question in EL. E., cp. “Whether will ye allowe him to protecte, to safe-conducte and to have marshall lawe as they are accustomed?” Spenser’s *State of Ireland* (cited in *Cent. Dict.*). Lady Macduff’s words can therefore mean ‘And am I to fly?’ if the reader wishes to put that sense on them. It is likely that the only difference between the two phrases was one of stress. ¶74 The contracted form ‘I’ve’ is probably intended here and in v. 79, and ‘I’m’ in v. 75; both were common in EL. E. as in MN. E. ¶76 LAUDABLE seems to be syncopated to ‘laud’ble’ here (cp. note to III. 2. 48), for GOOD requires sentence stress from its contrast to HARME. SOME-TIME, cp. I. 6. 11. ¶77 DANGEROUS, ‘dang’rous’; the word recalls the tone of Ham. III. 1. 69 ff. and of Sonn. LXVI. ¶78 WOMANLY and ‘manly’ now connote spiritual rather than physical qualities; but Chaucer uses “manly” in the sense of ‘strong,’ ‘of fine physique,’ and Shakspeare here evidently is thinking of the weakness of Lady Macduff’s defence. Coles glosses ‘womanish, womanly’ by “*muliebris, mollis*”; cp., also, “nor the Queene of Ptolemy More womanly then he” *Ant. & Cl.* I. 4. 6. ¶79 TO SAY, ‘of saying,’ cp. note to v. 70, above.

ACT IV SCENE II 79–85

What are these faces?

ENTER MURTHERRERS

MURTHERRER

Where is your husband?

WIFE

I hope, in no place so unsanctified

Where such as thou may’st finde him.

MURTHERRER

He’s a traitor.

SON

Thou ly’st, thou shagge-ear’d villaine!

MURTHERRER

What, you egge!

Yong fry of treachery!

STABBING HIM

SON

He has kill’d me, mother:

Run away, I pray you!

DIES. EXIT LADY MACDUFF CRYING MURTHERRER

EXEUNT MURTHERRERS

narrow that in it only one goes abreast]” *Tro. & Cr.* III. 3. 154. SUCH AS THOU MAY’ST, ‘it is possible for such as thou to,’ cp. note to III. 1. 122. ¶83 LY’ST, a monosyllable in e. N. E., cp. III. 2. 54. SHAGGE-EAR’D, ‘shaggy-eared,’ ‘rough-eared’; the epithet seems meaningless: but ‘shag-haired’ is a common word in EL. E. (cp. “shag haired, villosus” *Phr. Gen.*, “shag-haire, pelado” *Percival*) and occurs in 2 *Hen.* 6 III. 1. 367 in a

The FACES are probably those of Macbeth’s troops who have surprised the castle. It is probable that the scene when it left Shakspeare’s hands ended here with the EXIT CRYING MURTHERRER, the horrors of the carnage being left to the imagination. ¶81 UNSANCTIFIED seems to mean ‘without sanctuary,’ ‘violable,’ ‘unprotected.’ ¶82 WHERE: the EL. relative adverb is often equivalent to a MN. E. relative phrase, e.g. “that people where [*i.e.* among whom] God shall ordaine this ark to come to land” Bacon, ‘Atlantis’ 13, 17 (Moore-Smith). By extension of this usage “where” comes to be a correlative of SO in the sense of ‘that . . . in it,’ cp. “honour travels in a straight so narrow Where one but goes a breast [*i.e.* so

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

connection similar to this, "a shag-hayr'd craftie kerne." "Heare" is a common sixteenth-century spelling of 'hair'; e.g., in Ven.&Ad. 191, QO. 1593, we have "heares" for 'haire.' "Ear'd" may therefore be an error for 'hear'd' as some editors suppose. Again, "flag-eared" is a common EL. word meaning 'lop-eared.' Thomas, 1620, glosses *flaccidæ aures* as "loosly flagging ears," and Percival, ed. 1605, has "flag-eared" as a gloss for *en-capotado de orejas*. Comenius says a "loll ear'd" person is one "whose eares hang flagging downe." *fl* and *sh* are single types in EL. printing, and one is liable to be misprinted for the other: "flagge ear'd" may therefore have been intended; cp. also "flap-eared knave" in Tam. IV. 1.160. But it is perhaps wise to retain the reading of FO. I even though "shagge-ear'd" is a difficult epithet to understand. EGGE is a term of contempt for a puny person, cp. "Finch egge" Tro.&Cr. V. 1.40. ¶84 FRY is now obsolete in the sense of 'offspring,' cp. N.E.D. I. EXIT: FO. I omits 'Lady Macduff' and 'exeunt murtherers.'

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SCENE III

Scene III, like Scene IV at the end of Act II and Scene VI at the end of Act III, serves the purpose of a chorus intervening between Acts IV and V, its subject-matter being not so much *res acta* as *res transacta*—not dramatic, but historical. There is interjected an episode from Holinshed to sharpen the personalities of Macduff and Malcolm, and the arrival of Rosse bringing news of the action in Act IV furnishes the "messenger" to link it with what follows. As a chorus the scene has a double character, serving as epilogue to Act IV, "each new morne New widdowes howle," etc., and as prologue to Act V, "Macbeth Is ripe for shaking and the powres above Put on their instruments."

## SCENE III: ENGLAND: BEFORE THE KING'S PALACE ENTER MALCOLME AND MACDUFFE

I—8

Shakspeare in representing Malcolm's test of Macduff's loyalty follows Holinshed: "yet doubting whether he [i.e. Macduff] were come as one that ment unfeinedlie as he spake, or else as sent from Macbeth to betraie him, he thought to have some further triall." ¶1 DESOLATE, 'des'late.' ¶2 BOSOMES, 'hearts': the bosom was thought of as the seat of the emotions in EL. E., so that such a notion as "sad bosome" corresponded to MN. E. 'sad heart.' ¶3 MORTALL, 'death-dealing,' cp. "should by my mortall sword Be drained" Tro.&Cr. IV. 5. 134. GOOD



ET us seeke out some desolate  
shade, and there  
Weepe our sad bosomes empty.

MACDUFFE

Let us rather

Hold fast the mortall sword, and like good  
men

Bestride our downfall birthdome: each new  
morne

New widdowes howle, new orphans cry, new  
sorowes

Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds  
As if it felt with Scotland and yell'd out  
Like syllable of dolour.

THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

MEN, 'brave men,' cp. note to 1.2.4. ¶4 BESTRIDE in EL.E. means 'defend,' N.E.D. 2 c, an association traceable to such a use of the word as occurs in "a Romaine souldier being thrown to the ground even harde by him, Martius straight bestrod him and slew the enemie" North's Plutarch, 1595, p. 236. The same notion occurs also in 2Hen.4 1.1.207, "Tels them he doth bestride a bleeding land." DOWNFALL seems to be an EL. form of the participle without *-n* rather than a misprint, cp. the American 'forgotten' beside the English 'forgot.' In Skelton, 'Against the Scottes' v.610, the same form occurs, "Now is your pride fall to decay," and Stowe's Annales, 1615, p. 872, has "well-growe woods." BIRTHDOME, 'land of our birth,' cp. the quotation from 2Hen.4, above. The suffix *-dom* has a wider range of usage in EL.E. than in MN.E., cp. "the matter is verified too much of the Popedom" Golding's Calvin's Sermons, and see 1.5.71 of this play. "Birth-hood," 'native country,' is likewise good EL.E. ¶5 HOWLE, like YELL in v.7, had not in EL.E. the sense of depreciation which we attach to the words, see N.E.D. s.v. and note to 1.7.78. ¶6 THAT, 'so that,' as in 1.2.58. ¶8 The appropriateness of SYLLABLE is, of course, dependant on the notion of an echo suggested by v.6.

ACT IV                      SCENE III                      8-17

ACT IV      SCENE III

8-17

MALCOLME

What I beleewe I 'le waile,  
What know, beleewe, and what I can redresse,  
As I shall finde the time to friend, I wil.  
What you have spoke, it may be so, perchance.  
This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our  
tongues,  
Was once thought honest: you have lov'd  
him well.  
He hath not touch'd you yet. I am yong;  
but something <sup>low</sup>  
You may discerne of him through me, and  
wisdomes  
To offer up a weake, poore, innocent lambe  
T' appease an angry God.

¶8 WAILE, ‘bewail,’ cp.  
“’Tis fond [*i.e.* foolish] to  
waileinevitable strokes” Cor.  
IV. I. 26. Malcolm affect-  
to believe Macduff’s state-  
ment an exaggeration. ¶10  
TO FRIEND is a M.E. and  
e.N.E. phrase meaning ‘fa-  
vorable,’ see N. E. D. 6 b.  
¶11 SPOKE, ‘spoken,’ like  
“downfall,” above. IT: the  
repetition of the subject by a  
pronoun is a common EL.  
idiom still preserved in vul-  
gar and colloquial English.  
¶12 SOLE, ‘mere.’ The  
rhythm of Malcolm’s words,  
“ ’ x ’ ’ || ’ x ’ ’ , is full of  
bitterness. ¶14 TOUCH'D,  
‘injured,’ as in III. 2. 26. ¶15  
Modern editors accept Theo-  
bald’s emendation of ‘de-

serve' for DISCERNE, and the Cambridge text changes FO.I's comma after ME to a semicolon, evidently construing AND WISEDOME as a sentence without subject and predicate: but "and" makes such an interpretation difficult, for it connects "wisedome" with the preceding verb. 'Deserve' for "discerne" makes nonsense out of the latter part of the passage: I AM YONG, which is in contrast to the thought which BUT introduces, is meaningless with 'But you deserve something through me.' The normal contrast with Malcolm's youth and innocence would be a characteristic of age and experience; this we have if we take "discerne" in its EL. sense 'to learn by discernment,' N.E.D. 4: the word in this sense is usually followed by "of," "to discern of truth." THROUGH ME, i.e. by my sad experience. 'I am young, but still able to teach you what sort of a man Macbeth is.' AND WISEDOME is connected with "something" by one of those EL. zeugmatic constructions such as are found in I.5.22 and III.1.122. Malcolm's words are thus 'You may perceive what sort of a man Macbeth is from my experience, and learn

Wally - Love  
WATCH



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

from me the wisdom of offering up,' etc. Besides the alteration of the punctuation in the Cambridge text, AND WISEDOME has been emended by 't is wisdom,' 'wisdom 't were,' etc., and Cl. Pr. suggests that a whole line has dropped out. But we have already had this syntax twice in Macbeth, with the usual crop of emendations and assumptions of corruptness in each instance, and we shall have it again in V.2.4, where the text again makes difficulty when read as MN. E. ¶ 16 INNOCENT, 'inn'cent,' as before.

## ACT IV

## SCENE III

18-31

¶ 18 The stress falls upon I; either TREACHEROUS is syncopated and the completed verse has only four waves, or the indignation and surprise of Macduff at Malcolm's implication force a pause after "treacherous." The strong cæsura caused by such a pause often takes the place of an unstressed impulse in EL. verse. ¶ 19

RECOYLE, 'give way,' 'break down'; Cotgrave glosses "retrograder" by "to recoile." Shakspeare uses the word in the sense of 'degenerate' in "Recoyle from your great stocke" Cym. I.6.128.

¶ 20 IN, 'on the occasion of,' 'in the event of,' N. E. D. II b. IMPERIAL, 'supreme in authority,' N. E. D. 4; the word takes the chief stress of the phrase. CHARGE,

'commission,' cp. "To resist these incursions William Douglas, Earl of Angus, getteth charge" Drummond's History of Scotland, 1654, p. 25. Malcolm means 'in the event of a commission imposed by supreme authority.'

SHALL, the EL. use of the auxiliary in the sense of 'ought to,' 'must.' The verse has six waves. ¶ 21 THOUGHTS, 'fancies,' with possibly the sense of 'anxieties.' TRANSPOSE, 'change,' 'alter the nature of,' cp. 'do something or other, let it [i.e. brooding fear] not transpose thee' Burton's Anat. of Mel., II. 3. 5. Oliphant, 'New English' I, p. 378, cites the word as used by Barclay in the sense of 'wresting the law'; Shakspeare is fond of using words in legal senses, and "transpose" may have such a sense here: 'cannot wrest your character from its true action.' ¶ 23

MACDUFFE

I am not treacherous.

MALCOLME

But Macbeth is.

A good and vertuous nature may recoyle  
In an imperiall charge. But I shall crave  
your pardon;

That which you are my thoughts cannot  
transpose:

Angels are bright still, though the brightest  
fell:

Though all things foule would wear the  
brows of grace,

Yet grace must still looke so.

MACDUFFE

I have lost my hopes.

MALCOLME

Perchance even there where I did finde my  
doubts:

Why in that rawnesse left you wife and  
childe,

Those precious motives, those strong knots  
of love,

Without leave-taking? I pray you,

Let not my jealousies be your dishonors,

But mine owne safeties. You may be rightly  
just,

What ever I shall thinke.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

WOULD, 'were to,' cp. note to I.7.34. BROWS in EL.E. often means 'face,' 'appearance,' cp. "This seeming brow of justice" I Hen.4 IV.3.83 (cited in N.E.D. 5 c). The word usually carries with it a suggestion of hypocrisy. ¶ 24 SO, i.e. look like grace, an instance of the EL. use of "so" to represent a notion implied in the previous statement. HOPES, 'what I had hoped for,' N.E.D. 4 c. Macduff had expected to be welcomed by Malcolm and return with him to the rescue of Scotland. ¶ 25 That is, in the rashness of your flight. "Hope" also means 'ground of confidence' in EL.E., of which notion DOUBT is the negative; and in this negative form Malcolm couches his suspicion of Macduff, at the same time giving the reason for his distrust. The words are a good illustration of Shakspeare's compact phraseology. ¶ 26 THAT, 'such,' cp. note to v.74. RAWNESSE: both 'rashness' and 'cruelty' seem to have blended in the EL. use of this word, cp. "Some crying . . upon their children rawly left" Hen.5 IV.1.147 (cited by Cl.Pr.). ¶ 27 MOTIVES, cp. "motive, a moving cause or argument" Glossographia, here 'moving cause for action.' Shakspeare frequently applies the word to persons, see Schmidt s.v. KNOTS, 'bonds,' 'ties,' as often in EL.E.; cp. N.E.D. II. ¶ 28 LEAVE-TAKING: the stress falls upon the second element of the compound as in II.3.150. The pause that intervenes after the pointed question probably takes the place of a stressed impulse, giving a verse such as we have in I.5.41, I.5.58, II.1.51, and IV.3.111. It is possible to explain "I pray you" as an interjected phrase not part of the verse, such as appears in III.1.40, but this involves alteration of the FO. verse division down to "What ever I shall thinke" in v.31. ¶ 29 JEALOUSIES, 'expressions of distrust,' cp. N.E.D. 5 and its citation from Pell, 1659: "Sailing without any mistrust or jealousy of sands." For the plural form in "jealousies," "dishonors," "safeties," cp. note to III.1.122. DISHONORS, 'causes for shame,' a sense now somewhat unusual, cp. N.E.D. 2 and its citation from Eden, 1553: "they toke it for a dishonour to . . forsake their captayne." ¶ 30 SAFETIES in EL.E. means 'safeguards,' 'means of safety'; cp. "This is the safety or safeguard of our confederates" Phr.Gen., and "It is our safetie, and we must embrace This gentle offer of the perillous time" John IV.3.12; see also Ham.II.2.79. The word has three syllables. For the stress "mine ōwne safetiēs," cp. note to III.4.135. The sentence stress falls upon MAY, i.e. it is possible that you are. RIGHTLY, 'really,' 'perfectly,' as frequently in EL.E.; cp. "Rightly to be great" Ham.IV.4.53. JUST connoted in EL.E. the notion of faithfulness in personal obligations, a notion now expressed by 'honourable,' see N.E.D. 2 b and its citations from Smith's Virginia, 1624: "He was very just of [i.e. in respect to] his promise," and from Cæs. III.2.90, "He was my friend, faithfull and just to me." ¶ 31 SHALL, 'may,' 'am going to'; cp. "What is he that shall buy his flocke?" A.Y.L. II.4.88, and see note to II.3.127.

## ACT IV SCENE III 31-37

MACDUFFE

Bleed, bleed, poore country:

Great tyrrany, lay thou thy basis sure,

For goodnesse dare not check thee: wear  
thou thy wrongs;

The title is affear'd. Far thee well, lord:

I would not be the villaine that thou think'st  
For the whole space that's in the tyrant's  
graspe,

And the rich east to boot.

¶ 32 TYRRANY probably carries with it its EL. notion of 'usurpation,' cp. note to III.6.25 and the "title" notion following. ¶ 33 GOODNESSE seems here to mean 'right and justice': the word had a much wider application in EL.E. than it now has. DARE, the subjunctive form, cp. III.4.99. WEAR, 'proclaim,' 'maintain,' arising out of its EL. connotation of 'display,' found in v.46; cp.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

"You may weare her in title yours" Cym. I. 4. 96, and 'I wore the Christian cause upon my sword' Beaumont and Fletcher's *Captain*, II. I (cited in Cent. Dict. s.v. 8). "Win and weare" is a common EL. phrase which Shakspeare employs in *Ado* V. I. 82. In the explanation of the title-page to Slatyer's *Palæalbion*, the word is used of usurpation as it is here; for "tyranny," not "country," is the implied subject, as is shown by the context: "the Dane in armes by stealth Sought win [*i.e.* to win] or wed or weare her [*i.e.* England's] wealth." ¶ 34 THE, 'thy,' the EL. use of the definite article for the MN.E. possessive pronoun; unfamiliar with this syntax, many editors adopt Malone's emendation 'thy.' AFFEAR'D is an EL. legal term meaning 'established,' N.E.D. 2; an official who fixed the amount of fines, such as was Shakspeare's father, was called an "affeeror." The word is spelled both "affear" and "affeer,"—see citation from *Manwood*, N.E.D. s.v. 'affeeror,'—the *ea* before *r* being probably pronounced *i*. For TITLE in the sense of 'claim,' cp. note to IV. 2. 7. The verse lacks an impulse after "affear'd," cp. note to v. 28. ¶ 35 THINK'ST, 'hast in mind,' and not a mistake for 'think me'; cp. III. 2. 132.

## ACT IV

## SCENE III

37—49

¶ 38 ABSOLUTE, 'positive,' 'downright,' as in II. 6. 40; the word is clipped to 'absolute.' ¶ 39 THE is again more definite than in MN.E. and tantamount to 'his yoke.'

¶ 41 The change from neuter gender to personal gender in the course of the sentence is common in EL. E., cp. citation from *Greene* in the note to III. 2. 14. WITHALL, 'in addition to this,' 'moreover,' cp. "withall full ofte we see Cold wisdoms waighting on superfluous follie" *All's W.* I. I. 115, and "therewithall" III. I. 34. ¶ 42 IN MY RIGHT, 'in support of my claim to the crown,' cp. "in his [*i.e.* the King of England's] right we hold this towne" *John* II. I. 268, and "In her right we came" *ibid.* II. I. 548. Cowel defines a right as "not only a right for which a writ of right lies, but also any title or claim . . . for which no action is given by law but only an entry." ¶ 43 ENGLAND, *i.e.* Edward, the King of England; cp. "Norway himselfe" I. 2. 50. ¶ 44 FOR, 'notwithstanding,' an obsolete meaning illustrated in N.E.D. 25 a. ¶ 46 WEARE in the sense of 'display,' a kindred sense to that found in v. 33. YET goes with MORE, 'still more'; for the position of the adverb, cp. note to I. 4. 20. ¶ 48 SUNDRY, 'distinct,' 'diverse,' a meaning now obsolete; see Cent. Dict. s.v. ¶ 49 WHAT, 'who,' 'what sort of person,' cp. note to I. 3. 39. SHOULD BE, 'is to be,' cp. note to II. 3. 127.

MALCOLME

Be not offended:

I speake not as in absolute feare of you.

I thinke our country sinkes beneath the  
yoake;

It weepes, it bleeds; and each new day a  
gash

Is added to her wounds: I thinke withall  
There would be hands uplifted in my right;  
And heere from gracious England have I offer  
Of goodly thousands; but for all this,  
When I shall treade upon the tyrant's head,  
Or weare it on my sword, yet my poore

country

Shall have more vices then it had before,  
More suffer and more sundry wayes then  
ever,

By him that shall succede.

MACDUFFE

What should he be?



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶ 50 After verbs like KNOW, see, say, etc., the infinitive 'to be' is often omitted in EL.E., cp. "a grave man whom we had seen of great trust with Plexirtus" Sidney's *Arcadia*, p. 209 b; cp. also "I can say no more of myself but [sc. that I am] beloved of my people" *ibid.* p. 44. ¶ 51 PARTICULARS in EL.E. often means 'peculiar characteristics,' cp. "the particulars of future beings must needs be dark unto ancient theories" Browne's

## ACT IV SCENE III 50-66

MALCOLME

It is my selfe I meane: in whom I know  
All the particulars of vice so grafted  
That, when they shall be open'd, blacke  
Macbeth  
Will seeme as pure as snow, and the poore  
state

Esteeme him as a lambe, being compar'd  
With my confinelesse harmes.

MACDUFFE

Not in the legions  
Of horrid hell can come a divell more  
damn'd  
In evils to top Macbeth.

MALCOLME

I grant him bloody,  
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitfull,  
Sodaine, malicious, smacking of every sinne  
That has a name: but there's no bottome,  
none,  
In my voluptuousnesse: your wives, your  
daughters,  
Your matrons and your maides, could not  
fill up  
The cesterne of my lust, and my desire  
All continent impediments would ore-bear  
That did oppose my will: better Macbeth  
Then such an one to reigne.

and 'ills' are the same words, and no distinction was made between the two forms, "evil" being written where 'ill' was spoken as here. This is not confined to Scotch idiom, as stated in N.E.D.; there are numerous instances in literary English. TO TOP: cp. "to top or over-top one, *superare, exuperare*" Phr.Gen., and see the note to IV.1.89; cp.

Urn Burial, IV (cited by Cent. Dict.). GRAFTED: MN.E. 'inoculated' [i.e. budded as in grafting] involves a similar association of ideas. ¶ 52 OPEN'D seems here to have a double meaning applying to the unfolding and development of the graft and to the disclosure of fault; for the latter meaning, cp. "It is a great wisdom in a prince not to reject . . . them who . . . open to him his misdemeanours to the commonwealth" Drummond's *History of Scotland*, ed. 1654, p. 241. ¶ 54 BEING COMPAR'D, i.e. when his misdeeds are compared, an EL. construction according to sense rather than grammar. ¶ 55 CONFINESSES seems to be made upon the analogy of "fineless" and to mean 'limitless'; there is no other instance of the word given in N.E.D. MY HARMES, 'injuries done by me,' cp. "the most bloody nursser of his harmes" I Hen.6 IV. 7. 46. ¶ 56 DIVELL, the form with *i* still survives in vulgar English. In EL. literary English the word is frequently a monosyllable, cp. note to I.3. 107. "Damned in hell" for 'damned to hell' is common EL. phraseology illustrating the use of IN to express the end of an action, and the FO. punctuation, with its comma after "evils," is probably correct as indicating the relation of "in evils." ¶ 57 EVILS

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

also v. 52. BLOODY, 'murderous,' cp. note to III. I. 30. ¶ 58 LUXURIOUS in M.E. and e. N.E. means 'lecherous,' cp. "thou damned and luxurious mountaine goat" Hen. 5 IV. 4. 20. FALSE, 'false-hearted,' cp. note to II. 3. 143. ¶ 59 SODAINE is a M.E. and e. N.E. form of the word that is now 'sudden,' and means 'rash,' 'passionate'; cp. "sodaine and quicke in quarrell" A.Y.L. II. 7. 151, and "How, child of wrath and anger! the loud lie? For what, my sodaine boy?" Jonson's Alchemist, IV. 2. 569. There is an extra impulse before the cæsura and the second half-verse begins with a reversal, "smacking of," etc. ¶ 63 CESTERNE is a l. M.E. and e. N.E. spelling of 'cistern'; in EL. E. the word was commonly applied to a pool. ¶ 64

CONTINENT, 'restraining,' a common EL. meaning of the word, and not an imitation of the Latin *continens* as it is often explained, see N. E. D. 3.

¶ 65 WILL, 'pleasure,' cp. note to III. I. 120; in Shakspeare's time the word was often used for 'lust.'

¶ 66 INTEMPERANCE, 'intemp'rance.' ¶ 67 NATURE, 'character,' 'disposition'; the phrase goes with "intemperance." A TYRANNY, 'a sort of usurping power,' cp. note to III. 6. 23. That this meaning is involved in "tyranny" is shown by the thought which follows, 'it empties thrones'; the figure is of a piece with that EL. psychology of the will referred to in the note to I. 3. 139 ff. IT HATH is frequently contracted to "'t hath" in EL. verse, and probably is so here. ¶ 68 THRONE, i.e. of many kings, the EL. ἀπὸ κοινοῦ construction. ¶ 69 FALL, 'cause of ruin,' cp. "I will not dryve them out before you, that they may be a fall unto you" Coverdale's version of Judges II. 3, and "The tongue of man is his fall" Authorized Version of Eccles. V. 13 (cited in N. E. D. s.v. 17). YET, 'notwithstanding,' 'though this is the case': in MN.E. syntax 'yet' follows immediately after 'but.' ¶ 71 CONVEY, 'carry on,' with the notion of secrecy, N. E. D. 12. In Holinshed (Boswell-Stone, p. 38) Macduff promises to "convey the matter wiselie." SPACIOUS PLENTY, 'unrestricted license'; Baret glosses 'plentie' by "leave, licence, power." ¶ 72 TIME, 'the world,' cp. note to I. 5. 64. HOODWINKE in Shakspeare's time still retained much of its literal meaning,

## ACT IV

## SCENE III

66-84

### MACDUFFE

#### Boundlesse intemperance

In nature is a tyranny; it hath beene  
Th' untimely emptying of the happy throne  
And fall of many kings. But feare not yet  
To take upon you what is yours: you may  
Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty,  
And yet seeme cold, the time you may so  
hoodwinke.

We have willing dames enough; there cannot be

That vulture in you, to devoure so many  
As will to greatnesse dedicate themselves,  
Finding it so inclinde.

### MALCOLME

#### With this there growes

In my most ill-compos'd affection such  
A stanchlesse avarice that, were I king,  
I should cut off the nobles for their lands,  
Desire his jewels and this other's house:  
And my more-having would be as a sawce  
To make me hunger more; that I should  
forge

Quarrels unjust against the good and loyall,  
Destroying them for wealth.

¶ 71 CONVEY, 'carry on,' with the notion of secrecy, N. E. D. 12. In Holinshed (Boswell-Stone, p. 38) Macduff promises to "convey the matter wiselie." SPACIOUS PLENTY, 'unrestricted license'; Baret glosses 'plentie' by "leave, licence, power." ¶ 72 TIME, 'the world,' cp. note to I. 5. 64. HOODWINKE in Shakspeare's time still retained much of its literal meaning,

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

'blindfold,' cp. the citation from Cotgrave in note to III.2.46. ¶74 The demonstrative pronoun in EL.E. is sometimes equivalent to 'such a,' 'such,' cp. "that rawnesse" IV.3.26, "these traines" IV.3.118, and "Crassus . . bought bondmen that were masons, carpenters, and these devisours and builders" North's Plutarch, p. 597: THAT VULTURE TO here, therefore, means 'such a vulture as to.' ¶76 WITH THIS, 'in addition to this,' a frequent meaning of the preposition in e.N.E. ¶77 ILL-COMPOS'D, 'badly compounded,' cp. N.E.D.4. AFFECTION, 'disposition,' N.E.D.4. ¶78 "Staunch" is a noun in EL.E. meaning 'that which quenches,' and STANCHLESSE, therefore, a normal compound. ¶80 The personal pronoun of the third person was very frequently used indefinitely in EL. syntax, cp. "Let Amuracke himself or any he the proudest of you all" Greene's Alphonsus, 1662. Here it stands for 'one man's.' ¶81 MORE-HAVING is hyphenated in FO.1. A SAWCE in EL.E. is 'a provocative of appetite'; this meaning is still retained in the proverb 'Hunger is the best sauce'; a shade of this meaning may be contained in Lady Macbeth's words in III.4.36. ¶82 THAT, 'so that.' FORGE, 'invent,' N.E.D.4.

## ACT IV SCENE III 84-90

MACDUFFE

This avarice

Stickes deeper, growes with more pernicious  
roote

Then summer-seeming lust, and it hath bin  
The sword of our slaine kings: yet do not  
feare;

Scotland hath foysons to fill up your will  
Of your meere owne: all these are portable,  
With other graces weigh'd.

be suitable to,' and the two notions often blend. Perdita, in Wint.T. IV.4.74, says that rosemary and rue "keepe seeming [i.e. comely appearance] and savour [i.e. fragrance] all the winter long"; "summer-seeming," therefore, in normal EL.E. suggests a flower that blooms in the summer-time, i.e. an annual, and has the same meaning as "sommer-swalling," i.e. summer-blooming. The difficulty of the epithet when construed as MN.E. has given rise to various emendations, chief among which is 'summer-teeming' Theobald, and 'summer-seeding' (*d* is immediately over *m* in the EL. type-case) Heath *apud* Steevens, 1785; these emendations are better than such patches usually are, but so long as "summer-seeming" gives an apt and intelligible sense we are not justified in improving upon it. Malone called attention to the lines in Donne's Love's Alchymie: "And as no chymique [i.e. chemist] yet th' Elixar got, But glorifies his pregnant pot If by the way to him befall Some oderiferous thing or medicinal [med'cinal], So lovers dreame a rich and long delight, But get a winter-seeming summer's night," i.e. a short night of pleasure that belongs to winter because of the bitterness which follows (?), ed. 1650, p. 32. Shakspeare makes "summer" stand for 'pleasant' in "If't be summer newes Smile too't before: if wintery, thou need'st But keepe that count'nance stil" Cym. III.4.12. ¶87 THE SWORD OF OUR SLAINE KINGS: cp. "for that crime [i.e. avarice] the most part of our kings have beene slaine and brought to their final end" Holinshed (Boswell-Stone, p. 39). ¶88 FOYSONS in EL.E. means 'resources,' an extension of its sense of 'strength,' 'power,' N.E.D.2. FILL UP, 'satisfy,' cp. N.E.D. s.v. f, and its citation "comes . . to fill up your grace's request" Merch. IV.1.159. WILL, 'pleasure,' 'sensual appetite,' as above, v. 65. ¶89 OF goes with "fill" and means 'with.' MEERE in EL.E. means 'absolute,' cp. v. 152 and

¶85 STICKES DEEPER, 'has a deeper root,' cp. III.1.50. ¶86 SUMMER-SEEMING: the words evidently denote the opposite of 'deep-rooted': a similar notion is involved in "lest the base earth . . Disdaine to roote the sommer-swalling flowre" Two Gent. II.4.162. "Seem" in EL.E. means both 'to appear' and 'to belong to,' 'to



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

"a foreign stranger mere" Peele, 'Sir Clyomon and Sir Clamydes' I. 45; the words "meere owne" have a peculiar fitness when applied to the king's property: "this [i.e. property] none in our kingdom can be said to have in any lands and tenements, but only the king" Cowel s.v. 'property.' PORTABLE, 'endurable,' see N.E.D. s.v. 'importable' and cp. Holinshed, ed. Boswell-Stone, p. 38, "mine intemperance should be more importable unto you than the bloudie tyrannie of Macbeth now is." ¶ 90 GRACES, 'good qualities,' 'virtues,' N.E.D. I 3 b, a common meaning of the word in the 17th century, cp. "these graces [i.e. virtues] challenge [i.e. claim] grace [i.e. favour]" 3 Hen. 6 IV. 8. 48.

¶ 92 AS, 'such as,' a common meaning of the adverb in EL.E. VERITY, 'faithfulness,' cp. "his verity in love" A.Y.L. III. 4. 25. It is syncopated to 'ver'ty.' ¶ 93 BOUNTY, 'generosity,' N.E.D. 4. PERSÉVERANCE and "perséver" is the normal EL. stress, and not peculiar to Shakspeare, cp. "O lively life that deathless shall persever" [rhymes with ever] Collier, 'Lyrical Poems,' Per. Soc., p. 12, and "And wilt thou still persever in thy love" Greene, Orl. Fur., 488. "Perséverance" is the stress given by Minsheu: the word is syncopated to 'per-sev'rance.'

¶ 94 DEVOTION, 'earnest application,' N.E.D. 5. ¶ 95 RELLISH OF, not 'taste for,' but 'trace of,' cp. "some acte That has no relish of salvation in't" Ham. III. 3. 92; "it smacks of" and "it relishes of" are common glosses of *sapit* in EL.E. ABOUND: cp. "aboundeth in wickednesse" Coverdale's version of Jer. VI. 6, and "to abound . . in wickedness and vices, *abundare nequitia et vitiis*" Phr. Gen. ¶ 96 DIVISION is an EL. musical term denoting 'the execution of a rapid melodic passage originally conceived as the dividing of each of a succession of long notes into several short ones': cp. "the larke makes sweete division" Rom. & Jul. III. 5. 29. Malcolm's vices run the gamut of crime. ¶ 97 ACTING, 'executing,' cp. note to III. 4. 140. The verse is one of six waves. ¶ 98 MILKE OF CONCORD: see note to I. 5. 18. ¶ 99 UPPORE, 'break up in revolution,' cp. "*permiscere Græciam dictus est*, to trouble all Greece and set it in an uprore," and "*tumultuari Gallias comperit*, he found that the countreys of France were in an uprore" Cooper, and "an uproar, tumult, or hurley burley, *tumultus, insurrectio*" Holyoke. Modern editors would botch this graphic word into 'uptear,' 'uproot,' 'uprear.' UNIVERSALL PEACE is an EL. phrase for 'world-wide peace'; Shakspeare uses it also in Ant. & Cl. IV. 6. 5, "The time of universall peace is neere." CONFOUND, 'bring to naught,' as frequently in EL.E. ¶ 100 The passage is a delicate compliment to James I, whose proud boast was that he had peacefully accomplished the unity of England and Scotland, and whose whole political endeavour was to establish something like a 'universal peace' among the nations.

## ACT IV SCENE III 91-102

MALCOLME

But I have none: the king-becoming graces,  
As justice, verity, temp'rance, stablenesse,  
Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowlinesse,  
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,  
I have no relish of them, but abound  
In the division of each severall crime,  
Acting it many wayes. Nay, had I powre,  
I should

Poure the sweet milke of concord into hell,  
Uprore the universall peace, confound  
All unity on earth.

MACDUFFE

O Scotland, Scotland!

MALCOLME

If such a one be fit to governe, speake:  
I am as I have spoken.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶ 104 WITH, 'by.' UNTITLED, the negative of 'titled,' 'having no title,' cp. "False Duessa now untitled queene," *i.e.* having no claim to the throne, Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, v.9.42. BLOODY SCEPTRED, 'bloodily ruled,' cp. "This royall throne of kings, this sceptred isle" *Rich.* 2 II. 1. 40. Holinshed's words are: "the wicked tyrant that now reigneth over you, without anie right or title oppressing you with his most bloudie crueltie." ¶ 105 WHOLSOME means both 'prosperous' and 'healthy,' cp. "the tender of a wholesome weale" *Lear* 1.4.230, and "like a mildew'd eare Blasting his [*i.e.* its] wholsom brother" *Ham.* III. 4. 64. ¶ 106 SINCE THAT: in M.E. and e.N.E. particles are frequently strengthened by 'that'; the idiom is now archaic. TRUEST, 'most rightful,' 'legitimate,' cp. "the true prince" *I Hen.* 4 I. 2. 173 (though Falstaff is punning on the phrase). ¶ 107

## ACT IV SCENE III 102-114

### MACDUFFE

Fit to govern!

No, not to live. O nation miserable,  
With an untitled tyrant bloody sceptred,  
When shalt thou see thy wholesome dayes  
agaïne,

Since that the truest issue of thy throne  
By his owne interdiction stands accus'd,  
And does blaspheme his breed? Thy royall  
father

Was a most sainted king: the queene that  
bore thee,

Oftner upon her knees then on her feet,  
Dy'de every day she liv'd. Fare thee well!  
These evils thou repeat'st upon thy selfe  
Hath banish'd me from Scotland. O my  
breast,

Thy hope ends heere!

PHEME was used in EL.E. in the sense of 'slander,' 'speak great evil of,' N.E.D. 3; the sense still survives in MN.E., but not in such a connection as here. BREED, 'breeding,' 'ancestry,' N.E.D. 2 b. ¶ 109 SAINTED, 'saint-like,' 'holy,' cp. "This outward sainted deputie . . is yet a divell" *Meas.* III. 1. 89. FO. I hyphenates "sainted-king," why it is not easy to explain. ¶ 111 DY'DE EVERY DAY SHE LIV'D: Shakspeare evidently remembered St. Paul's words, "I die daily" *I Cor.* XV. 31. LIV'D: the inflectional ending of weak verbs in EL.E. still retained in many instances its M.E. syllabic force, cp. "Who with a taper walked in a sheete" Drayton, *Sp. Soc.*, 1. 288, and "Whenas myne eyes I raked out with pawes" Newton, 'Thebais,' *Sp. Soc.*, 1. 92, and "And seemed to dissuade the hand" *ibid.*; so "he look-ed," "I dream-ed," "I procur-ed," and such forms occur constantly in EL. poetry. "Lived" is dissyllabic in *Cæs.* III. 1. 257 (cited by Williams and Dyce). But the FO.'S "liv'd" makes a verse of the type illustrated in v. 28. ¶ 112 EVILS, 'sins,' 'vices,' a common meaning in EL.E.; cp. N. E. D. 5 and the citation from 'The Mir-

An INTERDICTION in Scottish law is a restraint imposed upon a person incapable of managing his own affairs on account of unsoundness of mind, improvidence, etc., cp. Scottish Acts of James VI, 1597, c. 118: "That the person at quhais instance the other is interdicted or inhibite produce the said interdiction and inhibition to the clerke of the shire" N.E.D. 'interdict' 2. This is another illustration of Shakspeare's wide legal knowledge. Modern editors, including those of the Cambridge text, unaware of this legal sense of 'interdiction,' and supposing the word to have a religious signification, have adopted the "accurst" of FOS. 2, 3, etc., for the "accust" of FO. 1, which seems to be an anomalous spelling of 'accus'd,' due to s coming in contact with the participial ending; in EL.E. the word means 'revealed in true character,' N.E.D. 6. ¶ 108 BLAS-

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

ror for Magistrates," "King Edwardes evils all wer counted mine." UPON as denoting the thing effected by the action has a wider range of usage in EL. E. than in MN. E., see v. 131; "do good upon one" and "do harm upon one" are common idioms in Shakspeare. The notion in REPEAT is probably that of 'reiterating charges.'

¶ 113 BREST: see note to v. 2.

¶ 116 SCRUPLES, 'doubts,' as in II. 3. 135. THOUGHTS, 'purposes'; the verse is one of six waves. ¶ 118 THESE, 'such as these,' cp. note to v. 74. TRAINES, 'tricks,' cp. "And all her traynes and all her treasons forth did lay" Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, V. 9. 47, and "train, a trap or wheedle" Kersey. ¶ 119 MODEST, 'sober,' cp. "men modest or moderate enough, *homines satis frugi ac sobrii*" Phr. Gen. PLUCKES ME, i.e. holds me back. ¶ 120 CREDULOUS: the *u* had not yet become *iu* as in MN. E., and the word was subject to syncopation, cp. "mirac'lous" in v. 147. ¶ 122 PUT TO, 'confide in,' cp. "I'le put My fortunes to your service" Wint. T. I. 2. 439. ¶ 123 UNSPEAKE, 'to speak the contrary of,' like "unsay"; cp. "she wished to unknowe what she knewe" Sidney's *Arcadia*, 260 b. ¶ 124 BLAMES, 'charges,' 'accusations,' a frequent meaning of the word in M. E. and e. N. E., see N. E. D. 2. ¶ 125 NATURE, 'character.' ¶ 131 TRULY, 'really,' 'according to nature,' cp. "effigies . . . Most truly limn'd" A. Y. L. II. 7. 193. ¶ 133 THY: apparently misprinted "they" in FO. I. HEERE APPROACH: such compounds are frequent in EL. E., cp. "heere remaine" v. 148, and "before breach" Hen. 5 IV. I. 179. ¶ 134 OLD SEYWARD is Holinshed's phraseology; the epithet does not savour of disrespect in EL. E., but is tantamount to 'senior.' ¶ 135 AT

## ACT IV SCENE III 114-137

MALCOLME

Macduff, this noble passion,  
Childe of integrity, hath from my soule  
Wip'd the blacke scruples, reconcil'd my  
thoughts  
To thy good truth and honor. Divellish  
Macbeth  
By many of these traines hath sought to win  
me  
Into his power, and modest wisdom pluckes  
me  
From over-credulous hast: but God above  
Deale betweene thee and me! For even now  
I put my selfe to thy direction, and  
Unspeak mine owne detraction, heere abjure  
The taints and blames I laide upon my selfe,  
For strangers to my nature. I am yet  
Unknowne to woman, never was forsworne,  
Scarsely have coveted what was mine owne,  
At no time broke my faith, would not betray  
The devill to his fellow and delight  
No lesse in truth then life: my first false  
speaking  
Was this upon my selfe: what I am truly,  
Is thine and my poore countries to command:  
Whither, indeed, before thy heere approach,  
Old Seyward, with ten thousand warlike men,  
Already at a point, was setting foorth.  
Now wee'l together; and the chance of  
goodnesse  
Be like our warranted quarrell! Why are  
you silent?

¶ 134 OLD SEYWARD is Holinshed's phraseology; the epithet does not savour of disrespect in EL. E., but is tantamount to 'senior.' ¶ 135 AT



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

A POINT, *i.e.* ready; "at point" is a common EL. phrase, cp. "all at point to die with violent laughter" Chapman's *Odyssey*, XVIII.140; the indefinite article is unusual, but Halliwell cites two instances from EL. literature, and Cl. Pr. quotes Florio's definition "*essere in punto*, to be in a readinesse, to be at a point." FOORTH: a M.E. lengthening of *o+r* followed by a consonant was still preserved in EL. E., probably with the sound *ū*, giving such spellings as "foorth," "woorth," "woord," etc. ¶ 136 WEE'L, 'we'll go,' with the usual omission of the verb of motion. CHANCE OF GOODNESSE has been much discussed, and there are at least eight emendations recorded, for the most part lame and impotent conclusions, based upon a lack of familiarity with Elizabethan idiom. But the N. E. D. shows that "goodnesse" in M. E. and e. N. E. had the sense of 'advantage,' 'profit,' passing into 'prosperity,' 'good fortune,' 'good success'; cp. its citation from Coverdale, 1550, "After trouble and adversite foloweth al maner of goodnes and felicite." This meaning is a natural inference from "God send you good of it, *feliciter tibi cedat*" Baret's *Alvearie*; "much good do't you" was a common EL. phrase. In Rich.2 II.1.212 York says, "What will ensue heereof there's none can tell, But by bad courses may be understood That their events can never fall out good." The same meaning occurs in the FO. text of Rich.3 I.4.194, "I charge you, as you hope for any goodnesse" (the Quarto reads: "to have redemption"); so "blisse and goodnesse on you" Meas. III.2.228. But another interpretation is possible by taking "of goodnesse" as a limiting genitive in the sense of 'rightfulness,' 'right and justice,' as used in IV.3.33. In either case Malcolm's words mean 'May our chance of good success be as sure as our cause is just,' *i.e.* May God defend the right! ¶ 137 WAR-

## ACT IV SCENE III 138-145

MACDUFFE

Such welcome and unwelcom things at once  
'T is hard to reconcile.

ENTER A DOCTOR

MALCOLME

Well, more anon.

TO DOCTOR

Comes the king forth, I pray you?

DOCTOR

I, sir; there are a crew of wretched soules  
That stay his cure; their malady convinces  
The great assay of art; but at his touch—  
Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand—  
They presently amend.

¶ 140 FORTH, 'abroad,' 'in public,' an EL. meaning of the adverb now obsolete. ¶ 141 CREW in EL. E. did not always have the derogatory sense that it has now except in phrases like 'boat's crew'; here it means 'company of people.' ¶ 142 STAY, 'wait for,' as in III.5.35. CONVINCES, 'defeats,' *i.e.* will not yield to;

the word in EL. E. also means 'to demonstrate anything to be erroneous,' cp. N. E. D. 6, and the meaning here may be 'demonstrates as ineffectual.' ¶ 143 GREAT ASSAY: "assay" means 'effort' or 'attempt,' N. E. D. 1, and "great" is used in its EL. sense of 'mighty,' 'powerful,' cp. "great tyranny" v. 32. ART, 'professional skill,' cp. IV.1.101 and "work in which they have . . . used a great deal of art" Moxon, *Mechanick Exercises* (cited in N. E. D. 4). ¶ 144 Fault has been found with SANCTITY, and Theobald proposed 'sanity,' evidently supposing that the word meant 'healing power'; but no trace of this meaning has as yet been found in EL. E. The word seems to be here used in the sense of 'miraculous

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

power'; Purchas, 'Pilgrimage' v. 310, speaking of "soules or persons" supposed to be "begotten of the Holy Spirit," says that they are held in "such reputation" that "if their haire be laid upon any they say that their sicknesses are cured," and goes on to cite a particular instance in the words "In this reputation of sanctitie they have a certaine old woman," etc. Here the notion involved in the word "sanctity" is the same as that implied by Shakspeare, *viz.* 'miracle-working power.' ¶ 145 PRESENTLY, 'immediately,' the usual meaning of the word in e.N.E.; cp. "with this knife I 'le helpe it presently" Rom.&Jul. iv. i. 54. AMEND, not 'improve,' as in MN.E., but 'recover,' N.E.D. 6b.

## ACT IV SCENE III 145-159

¶ 146 EVILL in M.E. and e.N.E. had the meaning of 'disease,' 'malady'; in this sense it is recorded in N.E.D. as late as 1725. The "king's evil" was one of a number of compounds like "foul evil," "falling evil," and described various scrofulous affections. "The evil" itself thus came to designate scrofula, which was a common affection, beyond "the great assay of art," in the 15th and 16th centuries. The power of the king to heal this disease by laying on of hands was popularly traced to Edward the Confessor, and was from time to time asserted by the Plantagenet and Stuart kings. James I, during the early years of his reign, revived public interest in the matter, expressing his fears that he might be considered superstitious in following the practice of his predecessors. The king, however, compromised by ascribing the potent effects of the royal touch to the efficacy of prayer. This was in the latter part of 1603, see Gardiner's History of England,

i. 152. Shakspeare seems pointedly to refer to this peculiar explanation in "How he solicites heaven, Himselfe best knowes," and in speaking of the power as a "healing benediction," so that the passage must have been written when James's public declaration was fresh in the public mind, say 1605 or 1606, and not in "after years," as Gardiner assumes, when this peculiar interpretation had been forgotten. ¶ 147 MYRACULOUS, 'mirac'lous,' see v. 120. ¶ 148 HEERE REMAINE: cp. v. 133; so "their often meeting" Jonson, 'Sejanus,' 1640, p. 335, and "the often harmonie" Drayton, 'Barrons Warres.' ¶ 149 I HAVE: probably contracted to "I've." SOLICITES, 'wins the favour of,'

MALCOLME

I thanke you, doctor.

EXIT

MACDUFFE

What's the disease he meanes?

MALCOLME

'T is call'd the evill:

A most myraculous worke in this good king;  
Which often, since my heere remaine in  
England,

I have seene him do. How he solicites  
heaven,  
Himselfe best knowes: but strangely visited  
people,

All swolne and ulcerous, pittifull to the eye,  
The meere dispaire of surgery, he cures,  
Hanging a golden stampe about their neckes,  
Put on with holy prayers: and 't is spoken,  
To the succeeding royalty he leaves  
The healing benediction. With this strange  
vertue,

He hath a heavenly guift of prophesie,  
And sundry blessings hang about his throne,  
That speake him full of grace.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

cp. "to sollicite men's minds and entice them with brybes" Cooper, and the similar notion involved in the use of the word in I.3.130. ¶ 150 HIMSELFE: see note to III.1.5. VISITED was probably shortened to 'vis'ted'; the word was widely used in EL.E. in the sense of 'afflicted,' and "visiting" is still found in the Bible in the sense of 'visitation' or 'infliction of evil.' ¶ 151 PITTIFULL is likewise syncopated, cp. III.2.47. ¶ 152 MEERE, 'absolute,' 'utter,' cp. note to v. 89. ¶ 153 STAMPE is an EL. word for 'coin,' cp. "I found thee of more vawle Then stampes in gold" Merry W. III.4.15. The coin hung about the necks of those touched for the 'evil' was the angel of about ten shillings value and known as "evil-gold," N.E.D. 6. Charles II had a special coin made for the ceremony, which came to be known as a "touch-piece." ¶ 154 HOLY PRAYERS: the form of prayer used on these occasions was inserted in the prayer-book in 1684 and remained until 1719 (Cl. Pr.). SPOKEN, 'currently reported,' cp. "there's wondrous things spoke of him" Cor. II.1.152. ¶ 156 WITH, 'in addition to,' as frequently in EL.E. VERTUE in M.E. and e.N.E. meant 'power,' cp. "knowing in himselfe that vertue had gone out of him" Mark V.3.30. ¶ 157 GUIFT: Baret laments the lack of a letter "to sound like *gamma*"; "for in spelling and reading we sound *g* before *e* and *i* after another sorte then we do before *a*, *o*, or *u*"; this lack was often supplied by *gu* in EL. writing, and the device is still current in MN.E. 'guess' (M.E. "gesse") and 'guilt' (M.E. "gilt"), etc. The GUIFT OF PROPHESEIE may be a covert reference to James's fondness for theological discussion: after the Hampton Court Conference in 1604 it was commonly remarked that "His majesty spoke by inspiration of the Spirit of God," and Ellesmere quoted the legal maxim *Rex est mixta persona cum sacerdote*. The words, however,

## ACT IV SCENE III 159-163

ENTER ROSSE

MACDUFFE

See, who comes heere?

MALCOLME

My countryman; but yet I know him not.

MACDUFFE

My ever gentle cozen, welcome hither!

MALCOLME

I know him now. Good God, betimes remove  
The meanes that makes us strangers!

ROSSE

Sir, amen!

enemies of Macbeth do not "know themselves." Other interpretations are that Malcolm fails to recognize Rosse because of the distance (Delius), and that he fails to recognize him because of his long absence from Scotland (Furness): the first quite ignores Malcolm's own explanation; the second gives "makes us strangers" the slightly forced meaning of 'has kept me away from Scotland.' ¶ 161 GENTLE, 'courteous,' 'noble,' cp. note to III.2.27. Macduff's hearty welcome of Rosse carries us back to their last meeting, Act II, Scene IV, and tells us that Rosse is no longer on the side of Macbeth as well as reassures Malcolm of his fidelity. ¶ 163 MEANES: cp. note to II.4.29. MAKES US STRANGERS, 'causes us to act in such an unnatural way,' 'makes us suspicious of one another,' cp. Macbeth's "you make me strange Even to the disposition that I owe" III.4.112.

are primarily due to Holinshead's statement—"Historie of England" p. 165 (Boswell-Stone, p. 40)—that Edward the Confessor, besides his gift of touch for the king's evil, was inspired with the gift of prophecy. ¶ 158 BLESSINGS, 'evidences of divine favour,' cp. "eminence, wealth, soveraignty, Which, to say sooth, are blessings" Hen.8 II.3.29. ¶ 159 SPEAKE, 'prove,' cp. "Howe this grace Speakes his owne standing" Timon I.1.30.

¶ 160 From Malcolm's explanation of his words in v.162 it would seem that he does not know whether Rosse is to be trusted or not—the



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

In this passage, as in the former one and in *Ado* II.3.49, the words carry the notion of 'suspicious.' SIR, probably the majesty 'sir,' cp. note to III.4.129.

¶ 165 KNOW IT SELFE, 'acknowledge what it really is,' cp. "know yourself, consider what you are, *intedescendas*" Phr. Gen.; the M.E. sense 'confess,' 'acknowledge,' N.E.D.3b, was probably still impliedly present in many of the idiomatic uses of the word. Rosse carries on Malcolm's notion of 'knowing.' ¶ 166 WHERE, 'for in Scotland'; in EL.E. "where" is often used like the connective relative. NOTHING does not mean 'nobody' as it has been interpreted, but the construction is *ἀπὸ κοινοῦ*, for SMILE in v. 167 has its EL. meaning of 'prosper' as well as that of MN.E. 'smile': i.e. 'where nothing prospers and no one smiles but he who knows nothing.' ¶ 168 RENT is a e.N.E. verb meaning 'to tear,' usually replaced in MN.E. by 'rend'; cp. "renting his face with his nayles" Cooper. ¶ 169 MADE: to make a groan, a sigh, a shriek, etc., are idiomatic EL. locutions in which the verb is now replaced by 'utter'; cp. Schmidt s.v. 'make,' and "he made a groan at it" Per. IV. 2.117. ¶ 170 MODERNE in EL.E. often means 'commonplace,' cp. "which moderne lamentation might have mov'd" Rom.&Jul. III.2.120 (cited by Delius), and 'That were no modern consequence' Jonson's *Poetaster*.

EXTASIE, as is shown by "violent," has much the same meaning as in III.2.22, i.e. fit of mad passion. Rosse says that no more importance is attached to it than to the ravings of delirium. DEADMAN'S is a compound word in EL.E., often hyphenated and often, as here, printed as one word, with the stress *déadmán's*; it survives in certain place-names, see N.E.D. s.v. and cp. "the strait passe was damm'd with deadmen" *Cym.* V.3.11, there cited. "Sickeman," found in Vicary, E.E.T.S., p. 16, seems to be another such compound. ¶ 171 FOR WHO is one of those bold locutions which, while violating the rules of grammar, logically reflect normal development of language: cp. III.1.25. One of these is still preserved in the colloquial idiom "Who have we here?" GOOD, 'brave,' cp. note to I.2.4. ¶ 172 Shakspeare probably refers to the custom of decorating the bonnet with sprigs of holly, broom, etc., assumed as badges of the various Scottish clans; cp. Planché, 'British Costume' p. 176. EXPIRE: it must be remembered that a 'vegetative soul' as well as an 'animal soul' played an important part in the biology of Shakspeare's time; cp. 'The common division of the soul is into three principal faculties, vegetal, sensitive, and rational, which makes three distinct kinds of living creatures, vegetal plants, sensible beasts, rational men. . . Necessary concomitants or affections of this

ACT IV SCENE III 164-173

MACDUFFE

Stands Scotland where it did?

ROSSE

Alas, poore countrey,  
Almost affraid to know it selfe! It cannot  
Be call'd our mother, but our grave; where  
nothing  
But who knowes nothing is once seene to  
smile;  
Where sighes and groanes and shrieks that  
rent the ayre  
Are made, not mark'd; where violent sorrow  
seemes  
A moderne extasie: the deadman's knell  
Is there scarce ask'd for who; and good  
men's lives  
Expire before the flowers in their caps,  
Dying or ere they sicken.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

vegetal faculty are life and death,' etc., Burton, 'Anat. of Mel.' I. I. 25. Herbert, 1634, reflects the same notion in "Palmeto . . is a soft pith in which consists the soule and vegetative virtue of that tree, which cut out the tree expires" (cited in N. E. D. 'expire' 5 b). Shakspeare's "expire," therefore, and "sicken," below, are applicable to both plants and men.

ACT IV SCENE III 173-180

MACDUFFE

Oh, relation

Too nice, and yet too true!

MALCOLME

What's the newest griefe?

ROSSE

That of an houres age doth hisse the speaker:  
Each minute teemes a new one.

MACDUFFE

How does my wife?

ROSSE

Why, well.

MACDUFFE

And all my children?

ROSSE

Well too.

MACDUFFE

The tyrant has not batter'd at their peace?

ROSSE

No; they were wel at peace when I did  
leave 'em.

MACDUFFE

Be not a niggard of your speech: how goes 't?

¶ 173 OR ERE, 'even before,' a doubled form of "ere" current in M. E. and e. N. E., and often confused with "or e'er," the contracted form of 'or ever.'

¶ 173 OH: the distinction between "Oh" and "O" is not made in EL. printing. RELATION, 'report,' as frequently in EL. E.; cp. "I will believe thee and make my senses credite thy relation" Per. V. I. 123. ¶ 174 NICE, 'accurate,' with the notion of 'fanciful,' 'sophisticated.' Macduff alludes to Rosse's flower metaphor. Rosse's fondness for poetic and graceful verbiage is evident all through the play; cp. Act I, Sc. III, Act II, Sc. IV, etc. Though he rarely appears in the play, Shakspeare contrives to impress us so sharply with his character that Macduff's epithet, "ever gentle," i. e. always courteous, always a gentleman, seems to fit him exactly. For WHAT'S 'what is' may have been intended, making the verse one of six waves. The FO. prints Oh . . true as one verse. NEW-EST, 'latest,' cp. note to I. 2. 3.

¶ 175 OF AN HOURS AGE:

cp. "but of a minute old" Cym. II. 5. 31. HISSE: the idiom is now usually 'hiss at,' see N. E. D. s. v. SPEAKER, 'reporter,' cp. note to v. 154. ¶ 176 TEEMES, 'gives birth to,' cp. "The earth obey'd and strait Op'ning her fertile wombe teem'd at a birth Innumerable living creatures" Milton, 'Paradise Lost' VII. 454. ¶ 177 CHILDREN: three syllables, cp. note to I. 5. 40. ¶ 178 BATTER'D AT, 'laid siege to,' cp. "batter, to play upon with ordnance" Baret's Alvearie. Macduff is thinking of his family as protected by the defences of his strong castle. ¶ 179 WEL AT PEACE: the truth of Rosse's equivocal answer depends upon the fact that "well" is used euphemistically in EL. E. of the dead; cp. "we use To say [i. e. are in the habit of saying] the dead are well" Ant. & Cl. II. 5. 32 (cited by Steevens). "At peace" is still so used in MN. E., but not "well." ¶ 180 Macduff's suspicions are aroused by the brevity of Rosse's answers, cp. "niggard of question" Ham. III. I. 13. ¶ 181 TRANSPORT in EL. E. is used of carrying news, messages, terms, etc.; cp. "Which

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

[i.e. the terms] . . shall be transported presently to France" 1 Hen.6 v.1.39, and "Might not you transport her purposes by word?" Lear IV.5.19. ¶182 HEAVILY: cp. "*hæc tristia dicta reportat*, he bringeth this heavie aunswere" Cooper. The word is probably syncopated to 'heav'ly': "easily" is a constantly recurring form of 'easily' in EL. texts. ¶183 WORTHY in M.E. means 'able,' 'strong,' 'possessing power or wealth,' and much

of this earlier meaning clung to the word in Shakspeare's time. OUT, 'away from home,' a common meaning of the adverb in EL.E.; this usage easily passed into 'under arms,' like our MN.E. 'up'; 'out in '45,' i.e. in the Jacobite rebellion of 1745, still preserves this sense of the word, as does also 'call out the militia.' ¶184 WITNEST, 'attested,' still preserved in the phrase 'witnesseth his hand and seal.' THE RATHER . . FOR THAT, 'the more strongly because,' cp. "Let me aske The rather for I now must make you know" Meas. I.4.21. ¶185 POWER, 'troops,' an association of ideas like that in the Latin *copia*: cp. v. 236. ¶186 TIME OF HELPE seems to mean 'opportunity for military aid to be sent'; "helpe" in EL.E. sometimes means 'allies,' cp. "Now if the helpe of Norfolke and my selfe . . Will but amount to five and twenty thousand" 3 Hen.6 II. I.178 (cited in N.E.D. 3 b). EYE, 'presence,' cp. "she . . is banish'd from your eye" Temp. II. I.126, and "We shall expresse our dutie in his eye" Ham. IV.4.6. In N.E.D. the word is said to occur with this sense only in phrases, but Shakspeare seems here to use it absolutely. ¶188 DOFFE

(i.e. do off), 'put away,' N.E.D. 3. 189 ENGLAND, 'the King of England,' cp. v. 43. ¶191 NONE, 'there is none,' the EL. omission of subject and predicate with the syntax noted in v. 50. ¶192 GIVES OUT is still used in this sense of 'report.' ¶195 LATCH is an e.N.E. word for 'catch': in Sonn. CXIII the eye is said to latch a form; cp. also "By hearing we know one sound from another, for a sound . . latch'd by the outward eare . . is conveyed to the inbred aire [i.e. ear—an interesting commentary on the possibility of "shag-ear'd" being a mistake for 'shag-hair'd' in IV.2.83]" Comenius's Janua, 330.

## ACT IV SCENE III 181-195

ROSSE

When I came hither to transport the tydings,  
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a  
rumour

Of many worthy fellows that were out;  
Which was to my beleefe witnest the rather  
For that I saw the tyrant's power a-foot:  
Now is the time of helpe; your eye in  
Scotland

Would create soldiours, make our women  
fight,

To doffe their dire distresses.

MALCOLME

Bee 't their comfort

We are comming thither: gracious England  
hath

Lent us good Seyward and ten thousand  
men;

An older and a better souldier none  
That Christendome gives out.

ROSSE

Would I could answer

This comfort with the like! But I have  
words

That would be howl'd out in the desert ayre,  
Where hearing should not latch them.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶ 195 It is possible that WHAT CONCERNE THEY THE GENERALL CAUSE is the first member of a double question, since WHAT is frequently used in EL. E. as an untranslatable interrogative particle without pronominal force and practically equivalent to the Latin *ne*. Sometimes this EL. 'what' is understood by the modern editor as a particle of exclamation expressing surprise: one of these occurs in Ham. I. I. 19, "What is Horatio there?" where there can be no surprise felt by the speaker, who is expecting Horatio. But as FO. I prints a comma after THEY the modern punctuation is here followed.

ACT IV SCENE III 195-210

MACDUFFE

What concerne they?

The generall cause? or is it a fee-griefe  
Due to some single brest?

ROSSE

No minde that's honest

But in it shares some woe; though the maine  
part

Pertaines to you alone.

MACDUFFE

If it be mine

Keepe it not from me, quickly let me have it.

ROSSE

Let not your eares dispise my tongue for ever,  
Which shall possesse them with the heaviest  
sound

That ever yet they heard.

MACDUFFE

Humh! I guesse at it.

ROSSE

Your castle is surpriz'd; your wife and babes  
Savagely slaughter'd: to relate the manner,  
Were on the quarry of these murther'd deere  
To adde the death of you.

MALCOLME

Mercifull heaven!

What, man! ne're pull your hat upon your  
browes;

Give sorrow words: the griefe that does not  
speake

Whispers the o're-fraught heart and bids it  
breake.

or left open at the end of it: quite different from the short grunt of dissatisfaction expressed by 'humph!' The same interjection occurs in Oth. V. 2. 36, "Oth. Humh! Des.

modern editor as a particle of exclamation expressing surprise: one of these occurs in Ham. I. I. 19, "What is Horatio there?" where there can be no surprise felt by the speaker, who is expecting Horatio. But as FO. I prints a comma after THEY the modern punctuation is here followed. ¶ 196 FEE-GRIEFE seems to be made upon the analogy of "fee-farm" (cp. Tro. & Cr. III. 2. 53), "fee-buck," "fee-penny," etc., where "fee" denotes a grant for some particular service. Macduff jokingly says, 'Who is so fortunate as to deserve this special favour?' ¶ 197 The omitted subject and predicate again: 'There is no honest heart but has a share in the woe which I shall tell,' referring to Macduff's "generall cause." ¶ 202 POSSESSE, 'make owner of,' a sense of the word now somewhat rare. ¶ 203 HUMH! Modern editors print 'hum!' which N. E. D. gives as a by-form of 'humph'; but the latter form dates from 1681, and the meaning, 'doubt or dissatisfaction,' does not at all fit this passage. "Humh" is probably the modern interjection of despair that is not represented in the literary language, but is a sound made by a groan of anguish, a relaxed vocal utterance with labial or nasal colouring according as the lips are closed

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

And yet I feare you: for you're fatall then When your eyes rowle so." ¶ 205 MAN-  
NER: cp. "she is dead and by strange manner" Cæs. IV. 3. 189. ¶ 206 QUARRY, 'heap  
of slaughtered game,' cp. note to I. 2. 14. ¶ 207 DEATH OF YOU, 'your own death':  
the prepositional form of the genitive is frequently used in EL. E. where MN. E. prefers  
the adjective pronoun. One of these idioms is still preserved in 'it will be the death of  
me.' ¶ 208 Shakspeare so frequently describes gestures and action in his dialogue that  
we can almost see the play as we read it. Pulling the hat over the brows seems to have  
been in his time a mark of desperation, cp. "with your hat penthouse like ore the shop of  
your eies" L. L. L. III. 1. 17, and "How melancholly doth he sit with his hat like a pent-  
house over the shop of his eyes" Poor Robin's Hue and Cry after Honey (cited from  
Halliwell's note on the L. L. L. passage). ¶ 209 SPEAKE in EL. E. rhymes with BREAKE,  
cp. note to I. 1. 6. ¶ 210 WHISPERS, 'whispers to,' cp. "whisper her eare and tell her" Ado  
III. 1. 4. O'RE-FRAUGHT,  
'over-freighted,' 'over-laden.'  
Collier thought that Shak-  
spere had in mind a couplet of  
Florio's translating Seneca's  
"*curæ leves loquuntur, in-  
gentes stupent*" Montaigne's  
Essays, 1. 2, viz. "light cares  
can freely speake, Great cares  
heart rather breake." But the  
expression may have been  
proverbial; it occurs several  
times couched in varying  
phraseology in Bodenham's  
Belvedere.

## ACT IV SCENE III 211-219

MACDUFFE

My children, too?

ROSSE

Wife, children, servants, all

That could be found.

MACDUFFE

And I must be from thence!

My wife kil'd too?

ROSSE

I have said.

MALCOLME

Be comforted:

Let's make us med'cines of our great revenge,  
To cure this deadly greefe.

MACDUFFE

He has no children. All my pretty ones?

Did you say all? O hell-kite! All?

What, all my pretty chickens and their damme  
At one fell swoope?

¶ 212 I MUST, etc., i.e. I  
had to be absent; "must" is  
originally a past tense. ¶ 213  
I HAVE SAID, 'I said so,' is  
an instance of an absolute  
use of 'say' now obsolete.  
It occurs in Ant. & Cl. III. 2.  
34; cp. also "You have said,  
but whether wisely or no let  
the forrest judge" A. Y. L.  
III. 2. 129. "Thou hast said,"  
the Authorized translation of  
σὺ εἶπας [i.e. you have said  
so] in Matt. XXVI. 64, pre-  
serves the same phrase, and  
is idiomatic EL. E., not a

Grecism. ¶ 214 US, i.e. for ourselves, the reflexive use of the personal pronoun. ¶ 215  
CURE, 'assuage'; it must be remembered that "cure" in EL. E. means 'to treat with the  
purpose of healing,' and not necessarily to succeed in the treatment as it does in MN. E.,  
cp. N. E. D. 3 and "To cure, to heale, to help, *medico*; loathing of meat is eased and  
cured with some bitter thing, *cibi satietas atque fastidium subamara aliqua re relevatur*"  
Baret's Alvearie. Malcolm's words "cure" and "deadly" are therefore not necessarily  
contradictory. DEADLY, 'killing,' 'mortal,' as usually in EL. E. ¶ 216 It has been the  
subject of much dispute whether Macduff means that Macbeth has no children and there-  
fore cannot feel the bitterness of a father's revenge, or simply remarks that Malcolm is

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

too young to understand the depth of a father's grief. But it is hardly likely that the ordinary reader of Shakspeare would have hesitated to refer Macduff's words to Macbeth, coming as they do after Malcolm's suggestion of a bitter revenge and followed as they are by the epithet "hell-kite," if Shakspeare editors had not suggested the difficulty. For Macduff to pause between these two thoughts and turn to Rosse with the artificial remark that Malcolm has no children might be a 'literary' touch, but is surely not a human one. Even had he done so, the audience would have to know beforehand that Rosse was a father too in order to make Macduff's turn to him for sympathy at all natural, and the audience has had no means of being sure of this. That Macbeth has a son according to one of the Scottish traditions does not interfere with Shakspeare's making him childless here; and even if there were such a tradition in Holinshed, Shakspeare need not have used it. He has prepared for such a situation as this by Macbeth's bitter speech about the "barren scepter" and the "unlineall hand," showing the deep yearning for fatherhood in the man and thus making us realize how terrible Macduff's revenge would have been had not fate put it beyond his power to wreak it. Macduff's thought is not that Malcolm cannot understand his grief (Malcolm's 'deadly' is clear enough evidence to the contrary), but that no revenge on

## ACT IV SCENE III 220-229

MALCOLME

Dispute it like a man.

MACDUFFE

I shall do so;

But I must also feele it as a man:

I cannot but remember such things were,  
That were most precious to me. Did heaven  
looke on,

And would not take their part? Sinfull  
Macduff,

They were all strooke for thee! Naught that  
I am,

Not for their owne demerits, but for mine,  
Fell slaughter on their soules. Heaven rest  
them now!

MALCOLME

Be this the whetstone of your sword: let  
griefe

Convert to anger: blunt not the heart, en-  
rage it.

Macbeth can be adequate to assuage it. ¶ 218 DAMME, 'mother,' in EL.E. is not restricted to quadrupeds as it is in MN.E., cp. the citation from Topsell, 1607, in N.E.D.: "the duckling the first day [can] swim in the water with his dam."

¶ 220 DISPUTE, 'oppose,' 'strive against,' N.E.D. 6; in EL.E. the word was not restricted to argumentation. The sentence stress is "I shall dô só," cp. also II.4.18: similar stress is still sometimes heard in colloquial English. ¶ 225 STROOKE is the EL. form of the participle before its *ū* was shortened to *ū* and developed to *ə* as in MN.E. In EL.E. the word was used of 'smiting by a mysterious power,' cp. "I shall meet him like a basilisk and strike him" Fletcher's False One, IV. 2 (cited in Cent. Dict.). MN.E. 'stricken' still retains a shade of this meaning. FORTHEE, i.e. on thy account. NAUGHT,

'wicked,' a common EL. meaning of the word that is preserved with weakened force in MN.E. 'naughty'; cp. "crooked, shrewd, evill, naught, *pravus*; naughtie and horrible, *nefastum et dirum*" Baret's Alvearie. ¶ 229 CONVERT TO, 'change its nature and become,' a meaning of the phrase current in the 16th and 17th centuries, cp. N.E.D. II e.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶ 232 INTERMISSION, 'respite,' cp. "They . . Afresh with conscious terrors vex me round That rest or intermission none I find" 'Paradise Lost' 11.802 (cited in N.E.D.).  
 ¶ 233 FIEND in EL.E. carries with it the notion of 'monster' as well as of 'demon.' ¶ 235

TIME, 'tune,' 'measure': the Cambridge text and all modern editors assume that the word is a misprint for 'tune.' But "time" is an EL. word for 'tune,' as is clearly shown by its entry in proper place in EL. dictionaries with *melos* as a gloss, as, e.g., in Holyoke and Coles; cp. also "a wonder to her time, in which she did nothing out of time" 'Patient Grisell,' ed. Per. Soc., p. 15; "The motions of the spheres are out of time" Massinger's Roman Actor (cited by Delius); "Some few lines set unto a solemn time" Fletcher's False One, 1.2; and "I must fit all these times or there's no music" Middleton's Chaste Maid, 11.3 (cited in Cent. Dict.). In Ham. 111. 1. 166 the QOS. all read "Like sweet bells jangled out of time," which the FOS. change to "out of tune" and modern editors improve into 'Like sweet bells jangled; out of tune and harsh.' In

Tw.N. 11.3.100 "time" seems to have the same meaning as here, but has been allowed to stand by most modern editors. It is apparent from these illustrations that the distinction between melody and rhythm was not sharply drawn in EL.E., and in view of this it is best to let the "time" of FO. I remain in the text. MANLY: in EL.E. adjectives ending in *-ly* are used as adverbs without change of form, e.g. "everi sonet orderly pointed" Robinson's Handeful of Pleasant Delites, title-page. Malcolm's reference is, of course, to "play the woman" (as on an instrument) in v.230. ¶ 236 POWER, 'army,' as above, v.185; cp. "a power of Danes arrive at Kingcorne" Holinshed, ed. Boswell-Stone, p. 21. ¶ 237 OUR LACKE, i.e. what we lack, with a suggestion of the meaning 'absence of a person,' making the phrase epigrammatic. LEAVE, 'royal permission to depart' or 'final audience with the king,' cp. N.E.D. ¶ 239 PUT ON has its EL. meaning of 'set to work,' cp. "Wee'l put on those shall praise your excellence" Ham. IV.7.132. Divine vengeance is ripe and the powers above are setting the scene for the final catastrophe, the deep consequence into which the 'instruments of darkness' have betrayed Macbeth. ¶ 240 It is perhaps worth recalling that the thought which closes the scene and forecasts the ultimate consequence is the same thought that Macbeth gives utterance to when he embarks on his career of bloodshed: "Time and the houre runs through the thickest day."

## ACT IV SCENE III 230-240

MACDUFFE

O, I could play the woman with mine eyes  
 And braggart with my tongue! But, gentle  
 heavens,

Cut short all intermission; front to front  
 Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and my selfe;  
 Within my sword's length set him; if he  
 scape,  
 Heaven forgive him too!

MALCOLME

This time goes manly.  
 Come, go we to the king; our power is ready;  
 Our lacke is nothing but our leave: Macbeth  
 Is ripe for shaking, and the powres above  
 Put on their instruments. Receive what  
 cheere you may:  
 The night is long that never findes the day.

EXEUNT

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

Act III pictures the internal catastrophe of the tragedy; Act V will portray the external catastrophe; Act IV links the two together. The internal Nemesis is Banquo's avenging minister; the external Nemesis is Macduff. The chief points of interest of the successive acts of the drama are thus Macbeth, Duncan, Banquo, Macduff, Malcolm. In Act IV it is the fear of Macduff, as in Act III it was the dread of Banquo, that is the central theme. The act begins with the witches' 'harping this fear aright'; it goes on to Macbeth's determination to remove its cause that he may 'sleep in spite of thunder,' his failure, and the revenge he will wreak by crushing Macduff's family. Scene II portrays the execution of this vindictive purpose; Scene III pictures the working of the consequence that Macbeth has failed to 'trammel up' and its leading on to the final catastrophe of Act V. This last scene we have called a chorus connecting Acts IV and V: but perhaps some word of qualification is necessary. The formal interest of a chorus—*viz.* that the actors in it shall not be participators in the tragedy—is lacking here, but the essential chorus interest is observed: for the main purpose of a chorus is to sum up the action which precedes and focus it upon what follows, and this function Scene III subserves. Although its actors are involved in the play itself, and perhaps more intimately involved than in the previous chorus scenes, yet they are during its course spectators as well, reviewing its action and forecasting its development. This is clearly brought out by Malcolm's words at the end of the scene: "Macbeth Is ripe for shaking, and the powres above Put on their instruments." He and Macduff thus picture themselves as the instruments of a divine vengeance rather than as individuals seeking their own selfish ends.

Act V presents the conclusion of the drama in a triple aspect which it will be well for the reader to bear in mind when he begins to study it—*viz.* the end of Lady Macbeth, the end of Macbeth, and the end of the Scottish interregnum of blood and tyranny. Around these subjects have been, as it were, the current interests of the play, eddying now about one theme, now about another, but always moving toward a final goal.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SCENE I OF ACT V

The sleep-walking scene is one of the most striking of the whole play. It not only gives us a notion of the mental torture which Lady Macbeth suffers, but represents to us as in a mirror the action of Acts II and III. No device could be more skilful: for the new events which attend the flight of Macduff and the murder of his family are in danger of absorbing all our sympathies and turning the main current of interest from Macbeth to Macduff and Malcolm. It serves another purpose, too, for it brings us back to Lady Macbeth herself, who has slipped out of the drama during the preceding act. We have already pointed out how she is involved in the internal catastrophe of Act III: but the play would lack symmetry were she not involved in its external Nemesis as well. This fifth act has a score to even for her as well as for Macbeth.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

## THE FIFT ACT

SCENE I: DUNSINANE: ANTE-ROOM IN THE CASTLE

ENTER A DOCTOR OF PHYSICKE AND A

WAYTING GENTLEWOMAN

I-15

DOCTOR

HAVE too nights watch'd with you, but can perceive no truth in your report. When was it shee last walk'd?

GENTLEWOMAN

Since his Majesty went into the field, I have seene her rise from her bed, throw her night-gown uppon her, unlocke her closset, take foorth paper, folde it, write upon 't, read it, afterwards seale it, and againe returne to bed; yet all this while in a most fast sleepe.

DOCTOR

A great perturbation in nature, to receyve at once the benefit of sleep, and do the effects of watching! In this slumbry agitation, besides her walking and other actuall performances, what, at any time, have you heard her say?

The place direction is, of course, a modern addition. DOCTOR OF PHYSICKE distinguishes the physician from the doctor of IV. 3. 129, who seems to be a doctor in the sense of 'learned man,' N. E. D. 4 or 5, such as James I gathered about him. ¶ I WATCH'D in EL.E. implies sitting up at night, cp. II.

2.71. ¶ 3 WALK'D: the word is common in EL.E. to denote unconscious locomotion, and does not need a qualifying phrase 'in her sleep' as in MN.E. ¶ 4 WENT INTO THE FIELD: Steevens, supposing that Macbeth was besieged in his castle of Dunsinane, found a contradiction in these words. But Holinshed tells us: "Heere upon issued oftentimes sundrie bickerings and diverse light skirmishes; for these that were of Malcolme's side would not jeopard to joine with their enemies in a pight [i.e. pitched] field . . . But after Macbeth perceived his enemies power to increase by such aid as came to them foorth of [i.e. out of] England with his adversarie Malcolme, he recoiled back into Fife, there purposing to abide in campe fortified at the castell of Dunsinane" ed. Boswell-Stone, p. 41. The time of this scene is therefore just before the arrival of the English power, and antecedent to that of Scene II. ¶ 5 NIGHT-GOWN, a night-robe or dressing-gown, as in II.2.70. ¶ 6 A CLOSSET in EL.E. was a writing-desk or cabinet, N.E.D. 3 a; cp. "I have lock'd the letter in my closset" Lear III.3.11. ¶ 7 To FOLDE a paper seems to have been a preliminary to writing a letter, the folding marking margins; cp. "I have accustomed those great persons that know me to endure blots, blurs, dashes, and botches in my letters, and a sheete with-



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

out folding or margine" Florio's Montaigne, I. 39. Lady Macbeth writes no letter in the play. But it is possible that Shakspeare means to imply here that the first suggestion of the murder of Duncan was conveyed by a letter from Lady Macbeth to her husband. In 1. 5. 57 Lady Macbeth has received "letters" from Macbeth in the interval between Scenes IV and V of Act I, though only one letter appears in the action: 1. 5. 25 points to the thought of Duncan's murder as being already in Macbeth's mind, and to his having expressed scruples about it, yet lending himself to the act. And "Chastise with the valour of my tongue" may imply that Lady Macbeth's pen has been at work already, her "high thee hither" expressing her impatience for him to get near enough for her to pour her spirits in his ear. It is quite possible that this was Shakspeare's conception of the situation, and that the Elizabethan actor expressed it by the way in which he read the letter which opens Scene V of Act I, and the stress he put upon the word 'tongue' in 1. 5. 28. In 1. 7. 47 ff. the plot seems to have been in the minds of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth longer than has been represented on the stage. On the other hand, Lady Macbeth's act may be one of those implications, so common in Shakspeare, which throw new light back upon an action long after it has passed the attention, to give it a richer value in the completed picture. Either explanation saves us from the necessity of considering this letter-writing of Lady Macbeth's as merely a casual and unrelated act mentioned by her attendant as a symptom of sleep-walking. Nor would Shakspeare in a scene like this be likely to represent the action of receiving a letter by the act of writing one, as has been suggested. We may see here also Shakspeare's vivid psychology: the fact that her husband is absent and that she is anxious for his safety produces the "perturbation," and she repeats, step by step, the experience of that other critical time when her husband was absent and she was anxious about him. ¶ 9 MOST in M. E. and e. N. E. was more frequently used with monosyllabic adjectives to make the superlative than it is now. FAST, 'sound,' now used only in the phrase 'fast asleep.' ¶ 10 The doctor uses professional language: PERTURBATION is the term used for 'anxiety,' 'sorrow' in Burton's Anat. of Mel. ¶ 11 DO THE EFFECTS OF is an EL. phrase meaning 'perform the acts associated with'; cp. "You say you love me and yet do the effectes of enmitie" Sidney's Arcadia, p. 254, and "the verie horses, angrie in their maister's anger, with love and obedience brought foorth the effects of hate and resistance" *ibid.*, p. 268. ¶ 12 WATCHING, 'waking,' cp. v. I and "though it cost mee ten nights' watchings" *Ado* II. 1. 386. SLUMBRY, 'occurring in sleep,' one of the EL. adjectives in -y. AGITATION, 'activity,' not 'mental agitation': cp. N. E. D. I. ¶ 13 ACTU-ALL PERFORMANCES, 'active functions,' 'mechanical acts': "actuall" had this literal sense in EL. E. The doctor opposes actual performances to mental operations.

## ACT V SCENE I 16-20

### GENTLEWOMAN

That, sir, which I will not report after her.

### DOCTOR

You may to me: and 't is most meet you should.

### GENTLEWOMAN

Neither to you nor any one, having no witnesse to confirme my speech.

'repeat' and 'say,' but not with 'report.' ¶ 19 The gentlewoman's canny reluctance to shelter herself under the physician's professional privilege is probably due to Shakspeare's knowledge of law. The question of the incompetency of the testimony of an "unconfirmed," i.e. unsupported, witness in trials for treason was not settled until 1695. The gentlewoman declines to take any risks: for her unsupported statement as to what Lady Macbeth has said would amount to treason if the doctor chose to betray her confidence.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶ 21 The interjection LO was commonly thus used in M.E. and e.N.E. with a following pronoun to attract attention, cp. "Why lo-you now; I have spoke to the purpose twice" Wint.T. 1.2.106. ¶ 22 GUISE, 'peculiar habit,' N.E.D.2; VERY intensifies the noun, giving the sense of an adverb 'exactly.' ¶ 23 STAND CLOSE, 'keep hidden,' the usual meaning of the EL.E. phrase. ¶ 24-30 The prose has the rhythm cadence of blank verse, cp. note to II.3.28.

¶ 26 'TIS HER COMMAND shows Lady Macbeth's terror of the darkness which she herself invoked in I.5.

51. The doctor's interest is professional, and his professional notes give a realistic touch to the picture. ¶ 28

SENSE ARE: modern editions alter to 'sense is'; but "sense" in EL.E. can be a plural form: in M.E. mono-

syllabic nouns ending in s, like "cas," "pas," etc., formed the plural without suffix. Some

of these historical forms survived in e.N.E., e.g. Sidney writes: "Do you not see the grasse ["grasse" in EL.E.

means 'blade of grass,' N.E.D. 3] how they excel in colour the emeralds, everie one striving to passe his fellow, and

yet they are all kept of an equal height?" 'Arcadia' p. 37 b; "busnesse," another of these

inflectionless plurals, is cited in the note to III.5.22. "Sense" occurs as a plural in "my

adder's sense To cryttick and to flatterer stopped are" Sonn. CXII. 10, where the fact that "are" rhymes with "care"

has saved it from the havoc of emendations. Other such forms are "ballance" Merch.

IV. 1.255 (altered to 'balances' by Rowe), and "corpes" in I Hen.4 1.1.43 (emended to 'corses' by Staunton).

"Horse," already noted in II.4.14, belongs to another class of words like 'mile,' etc., which retain O.E. forms. ¶ 31

ACCUSTOM'D, 'customary,' N.E.D. 1; the word is now usually restricted to persons. The notes of habit here imply a periodic recurrence of Lady Macbeth's hallucinations.

¶ 34 YET, 'still,' an adverb of time in this position in EL.E., cp. note to IV.1.100. ¶ 36 SATISFIE, 'assure'; Collier, unfamiliar with EL. idiom, thought Shakspeare wrote 'fortify,' but cp. Coles's gloss "satisfied, certior factus," and see the note to IV.1.104.

## ACT V

## SCENE I

21-37

ENTER LADY MACBETH WITH A TAPER

Lo you, heere she comes! This is her very guise; and, upon my life, fast asleepe. Observe her; stand close.

DOCTOR

How came she by that light?

GENTLEWOMAN

Why, it stood by her: she has light by her continually; 't is her command.

DOCTOR

You see, her eyes are open.

GENTLEWOMAN

I, but their sense are shut.

DOCTOR

What is it she does now? Looke how she rubbes her hands.

GENTLEWOMAN

It is an accustom'd action with her to seeme thus washing her hands: I have knowne her continue in this a quarter of an houre.

LADY MACBETH

Yet heere's a spot.

DOCTOR

Heark! she speaks: I will set downe what comes from her to satisfie my remembrance the more strongly.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶ 38 DAMNED, either 'damning' or 'damnable'; cp. note to I.2.14. There is probably a long pause after SAY; Lady Macbeth then lives over again the moments of the murder itself; she counts the clock strokes as the time set for the murder of Duncan arrives.

¶ 39 HELL IS MURKY: this apparently unconnected notion is usually taken as an expression of Lady Macbeth's horror at the soul-gloom she is plunged in. Delius, following a suggestion of Stevens, took it for a fear-inspired exclamation of Macbeth's at the time of the murder, "chastised" by Lady Macbeth's words that follow: but this seems to be a somewhat artificial interpretation. The thought may be due to one of those graphic associations of ideas which Shakspeare's words frequently imply: the remembrance of the oppressive gloom of the night when they started forth to murder Duncan, or even Lady Macbeth's recollection of her own words, "the night is murky," unites with her horror at the gloom in which her soul is plunged, and is transformed into terms of her present experience—"Hell is murky!"

## ACT V SCENE I 38-51

### LADY MACBETH

Out, damned spot! out, I say!—One: two: why, then 't is time to doo 't.—Hell is murky! Fye, my lord, fie! a souldier, and affear'd? what need we feare who knowes it, when none can call our powre to accompt?—Yet who would have thought the olde man to have had so much blood in him?

### DOCTOR

Do you marke that?

### LADY MACBETH

The Thane of Fife

Had a wife:

Where is she now?

—What, will these hands ne're be cleane?—

No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that: you marre all with this starting.

s.v. I. ¶ 41 In M.E. and e.N.E. the interrogative WHAT often means 'why.' ¶ 42 ACCOMPT, 'account,' cp. note to I.6.26. ¶ 43 There is probably a pause here, followed by "Yet who would have thought the olde man to have had so much blood in him?" This horrible, grim reflection of Lady Macbeth's depends for its point on age's poverty of blood; cp. "Stay, father, for . . . My youth can better spare my blood then you" Titus III. I. 153, and "I'le pawne the little blood which I have left" Wint. T. II. 3. 166. It throws back a lurid light on the dripping daggers which Macbeth forgot to leave in Duncan's chamber. The inhuman jest would have been disgusting at the time of the act itself: there the touch of nature was necessary—"Had he not resembled My father as he slept I had don't"; now we see the act in all its demoniac fury. A tragic interlude follows, probably with more washing of hands. ¶ 46 The new movement, though printed as prose in FO. I and in all modern editions, is couched in the rhythm of a ballad refrain. This lyric form and

That one of the effects of her madness is a terror of the darkness Shakspeare has already shown us in v. 26, and these two great horrors of darkness and hell may well blend together in her mind in an awful harmony. In Temp. I. 2. 214 Ferdinand's mad cry as he jumps into the sea, "Hell is empty, And all the devils are heere," seems to be due to the same spiritual vision of a haunted soul as that which causes Lady Macbeth's outcry. ¶ 40 Here we get more details of the murder thus reflected back upon it: Macbeth is afraid, and Lady Macbeth, as she has so often done, taunts him with personal cowardice, appealing to one of the deep springs of action in the man's character. FIE is an interjection of indignant reproach in EL. E., whose force has been much weakened in later usage, see N. E. D.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

the awful jest which precedes give the thought of the murder of an innocent mother the horror of demoniacal laughter. Lady Macbeth's words also seem to express the joy of a triumph over her hated rival. ¶ 50 NO MORE O' THAT: a new theme, with again the reflection of a fresh interest into a preceding scene, the grim repetition noting the authoritative insistence of Lady Macbeth's presence of mind. ¶ 51 YOU MARRE ALL, 'you spoil everything'; the phrase was almost stereotyped in EL. E.: cp. 'their own foolish proceedings that mar all' Burton, 'Anat. of Mel.' II.2.55. STARTING, cp. "he trembleth (starteth) at them; quaking, starting (shivering)" Comenius's Janua, 370; and also the note to III.4.63.

¶ 52 GO TOO in EL. E. is a strong expression of disapproval, like MN.E. 'Come, come, now!' cp. N.E.D. 91b. Here we seem again to have KNOWNE implying its common M.E. sense of 'acknowledged.' The last usage of the word in this sense cited in N.E.D. is dated 1450, but it may nevertheless have possessed its M.E. shade of meaning in Shakespeare's time: often a longer interval than a hundred years will separate two successive citations in the dictionary. "Know" seems to have the sense 'acknowledge' also in "'T were better for you if it were known in counsell [i.e. in secret]: you 'll be laugh'd at" Merry W. I. I.122 (Shallow has just told Falstaff, "The Counsell shall know this"). Again, in "Let but your honour know . . . Whether you had not sometime in your life Er'd in this point which now

you censure him, And pould the law upon you" Meas. II. I.8. It is pretty clear, therefore, that the N.E.D.'s citations s.v. 13 ought to be carried down to the seventeenth century. If the word has not this sense in this passage it is hard to see why the physician should have said, "Go too, go too!" ¶ 54 The stress on the gentlewoman's SPOKE also implies the 'acknowledge' meaning of the doctor's "knowne": 'she has said what she should not say, but whether or not it is a confession of fact, heaven only knows!' ¶ 55 WHAT SHE HAS KNOWNE, 'what she has gone through,' a meaning still preserved in such MN.E. phrases as 'I have known misfortune.' ¶ 59 Lady Macbeth's OH, OH, OH! in MN.E. suggests rather a groan of pain than the sigh of an overburdened heart. But from Florio's glossing of Italian *aih* by "oh, aye me, alas" and *hai* by "oh me" it would seem that EL.E. "oh" corresponded to MN.E. 'ah,' not MN.E. 'oh.' The variation between "ah" and "oh" in the Quarto spellings points in the same direction and can easily be accounted

## ACT V SCENE I 52-65

DOCTOR

Go too, go too; you have knowne what you should not.

GENTLEWOMAN

She has spoke what shee should not, I am sure of that: heaven knowes what she has knowne.

LADY MACBETH

Heere's the smell of the blood still; all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!

DOCTOR

What a sigh is there! The hart is sorely charg'd.

GENTLEWOMAN

I would not have such a heart in my bosome for the dignity of the whole body.

DOCTOR

Well, well, well!

GENTLEWOMAN

Pray God it be, sir.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

for on the assumption that the o represented a long, open o. ¶61 CHARG'D, 'burdened,' cp. N.E.D. I and V.8.5. ¶63 DIGNITY in M.E. and e.N.E. often means 'worth,' 'value,' cp. "a finger's dignity" Tro.&Cr. I.3.204. ¶64 WELL, WELL, WELL! seems to be the

## ACT V SCENE I 66-77

### DOCTOR

This disease is beyond my practise: yet I have knowne those which have walkt in their sleep who have dyed holily in their beds.

### LADY MACBETH

Wash your hands, put on your night-gowne.—Looke not so pale; I tell you yet againe, Banquo's buried: he cannot come out on's grave.

### DOCTOR

Even so?

### LADY MACBETH

To bed, to bed! there's knocking at the gate: come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What's done cannot be undone.—To bed, to bed, to bed!

### EXIT LADY MACBETH

Macbeth back to her going to bed on the night of Duncan's murder, the knocking at the gate, Macbeth's dazed mental condition, and, supreme touch, the helpless regret of his "Wake Duncan with thy knocking: I would thou could'st." There is no finer illustration of the power of word associations to reproduce or suggest experience than the one which Shakspeare gives us in these random utterances of Lady Macbeth: a few broken, disconnected phrases put before us a mass of perceptions, judgements, emotions, and all the external surroundings which framed them, so that the scene is as vividly present to our minds as if we were ourselves actors in it. And no more vivid picture of the hell that the human mind can make for itself out of its own experience has ever been revealed to the eye of the soul in sacred literature or profane than the one whose gates have here been for a moment opened to us. It is like the delirium of a fever in which the mind, loosed from the control of consciousness, returns to the scenes that have engraved themselves most deeply on its experience, and, following the deep grooves of association over and over again, lives through these experiences and all their concomitant perceptions, judgements, and emotions, only to return again and yet again, sucked back into their eddying currents as soon as the outer edge is reached, in an endless cycle of torture. Grant only the removal of the external stimuli to attention, and one has in the soul itself the material for a hell which needs no fire and brimstone to suggest its torture. For Lady Macbeth the play is over, her cup of horrors is drained: it needs only the messenger to announce her end—"The queene, my lord, is dead." Macbeth will fight against his doom a while longer,

expression of amazement still current in MN.E., and not an aposiopesis, as usually printed. The gentlewoman replies to the literal sense of the words.

¶66 BEYOND MY PRACTISE, 'outside of my experience,' cp. "Meere prattle without practise Is all his souldiership" Oth. I. I. 26.

¶68 HOLILY: that is, after the administration of the sacrament. ¶69 is an epitome of II.2.66-72. ¶70 I TELL YOU YET AGAINE: a frag-

ment of her talk with Macbeth after the banquet scene. ¶71 ON'S illustrates the frequent EL. confusion of the un-

stressed forms of "of" and "on." ¶73 EVEN SO? in EL.E. expresses surprise like our MN.E. 'Is it possible?'

cp. "your brother cannot live. Isab. Even so?" Meas. II. 4.33. ¶74 Shakspeare makes the semiconscious purpose of getting to bed reflect Lady

Macbeth's purpose of getting to bed reflect Lady

Macbeth's purpose of getting to bed reflect Lady

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

as he has fought it all along. And his stubborn resistance will save him at the last, not from paying the penalty of his acts, but from the complete destruction of soul that has overtaken his wife. Though in V. 5. 17 ff. he will come to the edge of the abyss into which Lady Macbeth has plunged and for a moment stand tottering on the brink of suicide, he will save himself and boldly front his doom, challenging his fate on the ground that he has been deceived by his intelligence and misled by his love, a claim that has in it elements of essential justness.

¶78 DIRECTLY, 'without more ado.' ¶79 The change to rhythm in a way closes the scene itself and adds a sort of epilogue that affects one like a sudden change from a minor key to the key of C major. WHISP'RINGS in EL. E. is the equivalent of 'insinuations,' 'slanders'; in the Authorized Version it translates the *ψιθυρισμοί* of II Cor. XII. 20, rendering the Greek original with an exactness of connotation not now possible. ¶80 UNNATURALL, 'unnat'ral,' as frequently in EL. E.; i.e. deeds which violate natural instincts breed unusual disturbances of the human organism. The doctor's words have more point in EL. E., where TROUBLES means 'diseased conditions'; cp. Oth. III. 3. 414, where Iago is "troubled with a raging tooth"; Lepidus is "troubled with the greene-sicknesse," in Ant. & Cl. III. 2. 5, and Antony is "troubled with a rume" *ibid.* III. 2. 57. Baret glosses "a minde troubled" by *alienatus*. This meaning of the word is still current in colloquial English. INFECTED MINDES, 'hearts tainted with crime' (cp. note to III. I. 65 and N. E. D. 6) as well as 'minds tainted with disease,' N. E. D. I b. ¶81 This figurative use of DISCHARGE, N. E. D. 8 c, now rare, was common in Shakspeare's time; the original meaning of the word is 'disburden,' not 'emit.' ¶83 GÓD, GÓD illustrates the increment of stress that comes by repetition. The words give a deep touch of human sympathy: the evidence of a terrible punishment for sin always makes the beholder feel the weakness of his own nature, "saved as by fire." ¶84 ALL, 'any.' ANNOYANCE is glossed "injury" in Kersey, "*læsio*" in Phr. Gen. and Cooper. The physician's inference is that Lady Macbeth will try to commit suicide. ¶85 STILL, 'always,' cp. I. 7. 8. ¶86 SHE HAS was probably contracted. MATED is a M. E. and e. N. E. word meaning 'dazed,' cp. "I thinke you are all mated or starke mad" Err. V. 281. AMAZ'D, 'bewildered,' 'confused,' cp. II. 3. 114. SIGHT is often used for eyes in EL. E., or rather for perception by

## ACT V

## SCENE I

77 \*-87

DOCTOR

Will she go now to bed?

GENTLEWOMAN

Directly.

DOCTOR

Foule whisp'rings are abroad: unnaturall  
deeds

Do breed unnaturall troubles: infected mindes  
To their deafe pillowes will discharge their  
secrets:

More needs she the divine then the physitian.  
God, God forgive us all! Looke after her;  
Remove from her the meanes of all annoyance,  
And still keepe eyes upon her. So, good  
night.

My minde she has mated, and amaz'd my  
sight;

I thinke, but dare not speake.

GENTLEWOMAN

Good night, good doctor.

EXEUNT

\* The text returns to the standard numeration.

nesse," in Ant. & Cl. III. 2. 5, and Antony is "troubled with a rume" *ibid.* III. 2. 57. Baret glosses "a minde troubled" by *alienatus*. This meaning of the word is still current in colloquial English. INFECTED MINDES, 'hearts tainted with crime' (cp. note to III. I. 65 and N. E. D. 6) as well as 'minds tainted with disease,' N. E. D. I b. ¶81 This figurative use of DISCHARGE, N. E. D. 8 c, now rare, was common in Shakspeare's time; the original meaning of the word is 'disburden,' not 'emit.' ¶83 GÓD, GÓD illustrates the increment of stress that comes by repetition. The words give a deep touch of human sympathy: the evidence of a terrible punishment for sin always makes the beholder feel the weakness of his own nature, "saved as by fire." ¶84 ALL, 'any.' ANNOYANCE is glossed "injury" in Kersey, "*læsio*" in Phr. Gen. and Cooper. The physician's inference is that Lady Macbeth will try to commit suicide. ¶85 STILL, 'always,' cp. I. 7. 8. ¶86 SHE HAS was probably contracted. MATED is a M. E. and e. N. E. word meaning 'dazed,' cp. "I thinke you are all mated or starke mad" Err. V. 281. AMAZ'D, 'bewildered,' 'confused,' cp. II. 3. 114. SIGHT is often used for eyes in EL. E., or rather for perception by



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

the sense of sight, cp. "The mind and sight distractedly commixt" Lover's Compl. 28. The doctor cannot believe the evidence of his eyes. ¶ 87 GOOD NIGHT, GOOD DOCTOR is another of those human touches so frequent in Shakspeare: the gentlewoman's "good night" brings the scene to a close in a phrase pregnant with homely association; her "good doctor" sinks the professional interest in the human, and in her simple words vibrates a sympathy born of their common vigil and their common vision of the unspeakable awfulness of human sin. The falling rhythm of the last word has a lingering note,— "Good night, good doctor,"—almost as if she had said, "Yea, God forgive us all!" One can easily perceive the peculiar force of this by imagining the scene to close in rising rhythm with v. 85.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SCENE II

After the tragic climax of Scene I, Scene II brings us back to Macbeth and the doom that is gathering about him as the powers above put on their instruments. The scene is a continuation of the theme of Scene VI of Act IV, by way of prologue to the catastrophe that is coming on. The editors of the Clarendon Press Macbeth were inclined to doubt its authenticity. But in its condensation and tenseness of expression it would be hard to parallel its style outside of Shakspeare; and its central notion—v. 12, Macbeth expressly recognized as mad by some of the actors in the drama—is an organic part of the play that could scarcely be omitted without marring the æsthetic structure of the whole. Moreover, its action supplements the "since his Majesty went into the field" of Scene I in such a way as to show that the two were conceived together.

## SCENE II: THE COUNTRY NEAR DUNSINANE DRUM AND COLOURS

ENTER MENTETH CATHNES ANGUS LENOX SOLDIERS

I—5

MENTETH



HE English powre is neere, led  
on by Malcolm,  
His unkle Seyward and the good  
Macduff:

Revenge burne in them; for  
their deere causes  
Would to the bleeding, and the grim alarme  
Excite the mortified man.

¶ 2 SEYWARD is spoken of by Holinshed as being the grandfather of Malcolm: "Duncane having two sonnes by his wife which was the daughter of Siward, earle of Northumberland" Boswell-Stone, p. 25. But "nephew" in EL.E. means 'grandson' as well as corresponds to MN.E. 'nephew,' cp. Baret's Alvearie, "a nephew . . . *qui ex*

*filiio filiave natus est, nepos ex fratre, vel sorore*"; Cooper glosses *nepos* "the sonne or daughter's sonne, a nephew"; Comenius, 604, is also quite clear on this point: "In the rank of them that lineally descend are the grandchild (the nephew—grandson—and neece), the great-grandchild (the nephew's son and the neece's daughter), the great-great-grandchild, and so downward with all their posterity." So "cousin" is a general term in EL.E.: "they that are of the same race—linage—and pedegree are called coozens, and kinsmen

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

by blood" Comenius, 601. It was, perhaps, this use of "nephew" that led Shakspeare to call Seyward Malcolm's UNKLE. GOOD, 'brave,' cp. note to I.2.4. ¶3 REVENGES: the EL. distributive plural of abstract nouns, cp. note to III.1.122. DEERE is used in EL.E. of what stands in an intimate relation to a person, whether of affection or of interest; in this latter usage it is almost untranslatable into MN.E. ¶4, 5 The FO. prints a comma after BLEEDING, but all modern editors depart from its punctuation. Two interpretations of these words have been given: Theobald, followed by most of the editors down to Cl.Pr., took THE MORTIFIED MAN in the sense of 'an ascetic,' referring to Rom.VIII.3, "but if yee through the spirit doe mortifie the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Stevens added citations from Greene's *Never too Late*, "I perceive in the words of the hermit the perfect idea of a mortified man," and from *Monsieur d'Olive*, 1606, "He like a mortified hermit sits." But "mortified man" in EL.E. does not necessarily imply that the mortified person is averse to bloodshedding. In Bullein's Dialogue, 1564, E.E.T.S., p.24, Ambodexter says, "I do remember that reverent mortified father, that holy man, Bishop Boner; . . if he were againe at libertie [he was confined in the Marshalsea in 1564] he . . trimely would roste these felowes and after burne them." This "mortified father" was the Bishop Bonner of 'Bloody Mary's' reign. Warburton noticed the difficulty in the definite article, and was for reading 'a mortified man.' The editors of the Cl.Pr. likewise objected to this established interpretation on the score of feebleness, and showed that "mortified" in EL.E. also meant 'made dead.' They saw in the passage a possible reference to the 'well-known superstition that the corpse of a murdered man bled afresh in the presence of the murderer.' (Burton, 'Anat. of Mel.' I.1.25, says that 'Campanella tries to prove the opinion of Paracelsus that there is a spiritual soul' by the fact that 'carcasses bleed at the sight of the murderer.') They give the interpretation, 'their dear causes would rouse a dead man to bleeding and to the grim call to arms,' admitting that the words yield an extravagant sense, but contending that we must choose between extravagance and feebleness. They suggested, too, that the whole passage may be spurious. The N.E.D. makes their interpretation more intelligible by showing that GRIM ALARM in EL.E. can mean 'furious [s.v. 2 a] onset [s.v. 11],' and that BLEEDING can mean 'gory,' 'sanguinary' (s.v. 1 b). Shakspeare uses "bleeding" in this sense in John II. 1.304, "bleeding ground"; in Rich.2 III.3.94, "bleeding warre"; in Rich.3 IV.4.209, "bleeding slaughter"; and in Cæs.III.1.168, "bleeding businesse." These connotations also apply to the former interpretation. But the objection of lack of point if we take "mortified man" as standing for ascetic still holds, and that of extravagance still remains if "mortified man" is tantamount to 'dead man'; and the objections that both interpretations depart from the FO. punctuation and that the notion demands the indefinite article likewise remain in either event.

But if we take the words with their context we have the suggestion of revenge being a burning fever. CAUSE in EL.E. means 'sickness,' 'disease,' N.E.D.12; Shakspeare in All's W. II.1.113 writes "toucht With that malignant cause"; in Cor.III.1.235 the first senator says, "Leave us to cure this cause"; Menenius adds, "For [i.e. 'he uses the word cause'] 't is a sore upon us, You cannot tent [i.e. probe] your selfe." In 2Hen.4 IV.1.53 the archbishop says, "Wherefore doe I this [i.e. take up arms in rebellion]? Wee are all diseases'd And with our surfetting and wanton howres Have brought our selves into a burning fever, And wee must bleede for it"; cp. also "A fever in your bloud? why then, incision [i.e. bleeding] Would let her out in sawcers" L.L.L. IV.3.97; cp., too, Rich.3 III.1.183. Bleeding for fever was common medical practice in Shakspeare's day. The latter part of the sentence carries out this medical phraseology but gives it a different turn. MORTIFIED as an EL.E. medical term means 'benumbed,' 'incapable of function,' cp. Kersey, "mortification . . in surgery: a loss of the native heat and of sense in any part of the body." This meaning is clearly implied in Lear II.3.14, "Bedlam beggars who . . Strike [i.e. thrust] in their num'd and mortified armes, Pins, wooden-prickes, nayles." MAN in EL.E. is used frequently in the sense of 'manhood,' 'manliness': in V.8.18 Mac-

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

beth says that Macduff's words have cowed his "better part of man," i.e. the better part of his manhood, his personal courage; Marston in 'Antonio and Mellida' I. I. 160 has "O now Antonio . . . Heap up thy powers, double all thy man"; Ben Jonson in 'Every Man in his Humour' II. I writes "Mee thought hee bare himselfe in such a fashion, So full of man and sweetnesse in his courage." THE MORTIFIED MAN in EL. E. can therefore mean 'their paralysed manhood,' the definite article being used as a possessive pronoun. EXCITE, in its sense of 'arouse,' 'quicken,' N. E. D. 2 c, is a fitting word for GRIM ALARM, which in EL. E. means not only the 'stern alarm' of war, but has also the sense of 'incitement,' N. E. D. 6, now obsolete. The connection between the two clauses may easily be that of an EL. ἀπὸ κοινοῦ construction, always a stone of stumbling to modern readers, cp. notes to I. 5. 24, III. 1. 122, and IV. 3. 15. If this be the case we have WOULD expressed in the first clause with its EL. sense of 'are ready for,' cp. "he is very sicke and would to bed" Hen. 5 II. 1. 86, recalling Malcolm's words "Macbeth is ripe for shaking"; in the second clause its 'must have' meaning is understood, cp. "that would be scann'd" Ham. III. 3. 75, and "Sorrow would sollace and mine age would ease" 2 Hen. 6 II. 3. 21. To sum up, this interpretation gives us as the MN. E. sense of the whole passage: 'Revenge burn in them: I say burn, because they suffer from a fever which needs to be bled, and war's stern alarm must furnish the furious incitement to rouse from its lethargy their lifeless manhood, so long crushed under the heel of the tyrant.' This reading not only preserves the punctuation of FO. I but gives to Shakspeare's words that graphic and tense connection which is so characteristic of his writing. The only objection to it is that the words and syntax are unfamiliar to MN. E. But Shakspeare is never considerate of the modern reader, and did not reckon with the comprehension of a generation which would read his plays three hundred years after he wrote them. If, however, the objection is to hold, the only escape from the dilemma of obscurity or weakness is to throw the blame upon the printer or

upon the editorial carelessness of Hemminge and Condeell, and say that the passage is 'hopelessly corrupt.'

## ACT V SCENE II 5-11

ANGUS

Neere Byrnan wood

Shall we well meet them; that way are they  
comming.

CATHNES

Who knowes if Donalbane be with his brother?

LENOX

For certaine, sir, he is not: I have a file  
Of all the gentry: there is Seyward's sonne,  
And many unruffe youths that even now  
Protest their first of manhood.

¶ 6 WELL is used as an intensive adverb in EL. E. with the notion of 'fitness,' 'advantage,' still preserved in such phrases as 'he is well able,' 'I can well afford,' 'you are well met,' etc. ¶ 8 FILE, 'list,' cp. III. 1. 95, and "Our present musters grow upon the file" 2 Hen. 4 I. 3. 10. ¶ 9 GENTRY in its EL. sense includes the nobility. ¶ 10 UNRUFFE: Autolycus answers the shepherd's "We

are but plaine fellowes, sir" with "A lye: you are rough and hayrie," playing on "plaine" in the sense of 'smooth.' "Rough," "hearie," was a common EL. gloss for *hirsutus*, see Cooper, s.v.; and cp. "rough or rugged with haire or bristles"; "my brother is hearie but I am smooth" Baret, 'Alvearie.' *un-* had a much wider range of application in EL. E. than in MN. E., giving forms like "unlevell," "unpossible," "unperfect," "uncessantly." The Folio spelling seems to be phonetic. ¶ 11 PROTEST THEIR FIRST OF MANHOOD: 'proclaim the first of their manhood' is the usual explanation,—cp. "my neer'st of life" III. 1. 117,—but it is an awkward one. The words are better taken as a continuation of the thought in the previous clause, with "protest" in its EL. sense of 'put



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

in evidence,' 'cite as evidence'; cp. Comenius, "a man's chin is covered first with down, then a long and large beard; . . yet some are beardless, some have beards beginning to bud." This gives point to the EVEN NOW, the "first of manhood" being the down on their unrough chins.

## ACT V

## SCENE II

11-16

MENTETH

What does the tyrant?

CATHNES

Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies:

Some say hee's mad; others, that lesser hate him,

Do call it valiant fury: but, for certaine,  
He cannot buckle his distemper'd cause  
Within the belt of rule.

¶ 11 WHAT DOES THE TYRANT? illustrates a common EL. arrangement of the interrogative sentence now obsolete. ¶ 13 LESSER is an adverb in EL. E., see N. E. D. s.v., and cp. "No lesser of her honour confident" Cym. V. 5. 187. Macbeth's insanity, like Hamlet's, is but suggested to the reader: Shakspeare is too much of a poet

to declare explicitly what insanity is, or to label Lear, Hamlet, Othello, and Macbeth as mad. They have all "a feaver of the madde" in them that lifts them out of the common range of experience and makes them interesting. Moreover, the phenomena of insanity in Shakspeare's time were vague and mysterious, as is evident from Burton's treatment of the subject. The abnormal acts of Hamlet, Macbeth, Lear, and Othello belong to that borderland of diseased mentality which in Elizabethan, as in classic phraseology, was denoted by the term "melancholy." Macbeth does not understand human and divine laws,—*'non cognoscit homines, non cognoscit leges,'*—Lear and Othello do not understand women, Hamlet does not understand himself: this touch of the mad, this lack of balance of soul and mind, this 'mind diseased' and all its havoc of human life and human hopes is the theme of Shakspeare's great tragedies. In Hamlet and Macbeth the exciting influences of the tragedy come from without, the ghost in the one case, the witches in the other; in Othello and Lear they work from within, rising from a natural jealousy and suspicion rendered inordinate by an inordinate love. In all it is their failure to understand the souls of men and the laws of life that gives the deep pathos. ¶ 14 FOR CERTAINE, i.e. I report it for a certainty, was used thus absolutely in EL. E. in the sense of MN. E. 'one thing is certain'; it is now felt rather as an adverbial phrase qualifying the verb of the sentence in which it stands. ¶ 15 Caithness's words have made great difficulty for modern editors, some of whom would change "cause" to 'course' or to 'corse,' under the usual assumption that where the text is unintelligible as MN. E. it is corrupt. But BUCKLE IN is used in this same figurative sense of 'limit,' 'enclose' (N. E. D. I b) in "That the stretching of a span buckles in his summe of age" A. Y. L. III. 2. 140, where the EL. meaning 'fasten in any way' passes over into figurative usage. CAUSE is not only intelligible in EL. E. but exactly the word that suits the connection, for it means 'disease,' see note to "deere causes" v. 3. DISTEMPER'D in EL. E. is a medical term denoting what was conceived to be a disproportionate mixture of the bodily humours: see N. E. D. 'distemper' sb. 13. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it is frequently used with reference to insanity, which, in the EL. mind, was associated with a diseased condition of the 'humours.' N. E. D. s.v. 3 b cites Hooker, 1594, as speaking of "distempered affection"; Herbert, 1633, of "distempered fears"; Hobbes, 1651, of a "distempered brain": this latter association is still in use, though it has lost its sharpness. As the word "distempered" also means 'immoderate,' 'extreme,'—Hooker, 1586, speaks of a "distempered or extraordinarie choler," N. E. D. 5,—"distempered cause" is a very apposite reference to Macbeth's insanity and has nothing to do with 'dropsical affections' or with 'discontented parties in the state.'

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶ 16 RULE in EL. E., as frequently in MN. E., is used in the sense of 'regimen,' and "rule of health" is a M. E. and e. N. E. phrase for 'regimen of health.' The verb "rule" in EL. E. also meant 'to control the passions,' cp. "To rule his affection and talk, *animo et orationi moderari*," "I could not rule myself but that, etc., *imperare animo nequivi quin*," and "I should be scantily able to rule my selfe, *vix compos mei essem*" Baret's *Alvearie*. The words, then, are not a mere general figure but have immediate reference to the "mad" above

## ACT V SCENE II 16-25

ANGUS

Now does he feele

His secret murthers sticking on his hands;  
Now minutely revolts upbraid his faith-  
breach;

Those he commands move onely in command,  
Nothing in love: now does he feele his title  
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe  
Upon a dwarfish theefe.

MENTETH

Who then shall blame

His pester'd senses to recoyle and start,  
When all that is within him does condemne  
It selfe for being there?

for me: Lye they upon thy hand and be undone by 'em!" Ant. & Cl. II. 5. 105. The 'merchandise' that Cleopatra here alludes to is the messenger's announcement that Antony is married to Octavia. ¶ 18 MINUTELY, with the stress on the first syllable, is an EL. compound like MN. E. 'hourly,' cp. "God's minutely providence," cited from Hammond (1605-1660) in Cent. Dict. UPBRAID in EL. E. means 'to cast in one's teeth,' 'to twit with,' as it is glossed in Comenius and Baret's *Alvearie*; cp. "I would not boast my actions, yet 't is lawful To upbraid my benefits to unthankful men" Massinger's *Unnatural Combat*, I. 1 (cited in Cent. Dict.). FAITH in EL. E. carries with it the notion of 'fealty,' cp. "The lords took . . their oaths of faith and allegiance unto Don Philip" W. Phillips, 1598 (cited in N. E. D. 9). The revolts of Macbeth's own subjects cast in his teeth his disloyalty to Duncan. ¶ 19 IN COMMAND, 'by reason of command,' cp. "in an imperiall charge" IV. 3. 20. ¶ 20 NOTHING is the EL. adverb, cp. note to I. 3. 96. TITLE, 'claim to the sovereignty,' cp. note to IV. 3. 104. ¶ 23 PESTER'D in EL. E. means 'hampered,' 'cumbered,' cp. "now all places are pestered with builded houses" Comenius, 522; the word passes over into the general sense of 'vex,' 'annoy,' cp. "would over boord have cast his golden sheepe As to unworthy ballace [ballast, lading] to be thought To pester roome" Drayton's *Heroicall Epistles*, 61, Sp. Soc., p. 290; see also Ham. I. 2. 22; the word is retained in the sense of 'annoy' in MN. E. In Shakspeare's time it seems also to have been applied to an overloaded stomach, cp. "to pester, to cloie" Baret's *Alvearie*; Percival glosses it by the Spanish *enfadar, enfastidiar*; Cotgrave, by *empesché*, and gives "*empesché de sa personne*, unwieldie, pursie, grosse; *poictrine empesché*, troubled with obstruction and (more particularly) obstruction of the stomach": hence the turn of the phrase which follows. Macbeth himself says he has "supt full with horrors." The refer-

and to Macbeth's distempered will, which he himself first recognized to have passed beyond his "rule" in I. I. 139.

¶ 17 STICKING ON HIS HANDS seems to be the phrase which in Coles has the form "to stick a hand, *ægré distrahi, raro præstinari*," and to mean that Macbeth can now find no one to take his secret murders off his hands, as Malcolm and Donalbaine took the odium of Duncan's murder and the assassins that of Banquo; the market is glutted now, he can 'palm them off' on no one. A similar EL. expression is "to lie upon one's hands," which occurs in "The marchandize . . Are all too deere

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

ence of course is to the "startings" of Macbeth's madness as being but the natural result of his crime-cloyed soul. RECOYLE AND START, 'for recoiling and starting'; the EL. infinitive often corresponding to the MN. E. preposition and participle. For "recoyle" in its EL. sense of 'break,' 'break down,' cp. IV. 3. 19, and for "start" see note to III. 4. 63.

¶ 25 MARCHWEON is a normal EL. form of the first person plural imperative. ¶ 27 THE MED'CINE OF THE SICKLY WEALE is Malcolm; the word has been

taken in its somewhat rare EL. sense of 'physician,' cp. Florio's "*medico*, a medicine, a leach, a phisitian" (cited by Cl. Pr.), but such an interpretation weakens the force of the WITH HIM: Malcolm too will, if need be, shed his last drop of blood for his country, and the healing purge of their shed blood will medicine the sickly weal. ¶ 28 POURE, 'pour out'; in EL. E. the word did not require the complementing adverb. OUR COUNTRIES PURGE is the EL. E. objective genitive idiom. ¶ 29 EACH in M. E. and EL. E. is often tantamount to 'every,' cp. note to IV. 2. 22 and its citation from Heywood. US is the reflexively used personal pronoun common in EL. E. IT NEEDES, 'is necessary,' the M. E. and e. N. E. impersonal idiom. ¶ 30 SOVERAIGNE in EL. E. is used of anything that has a potency for healing, cp. "the most sovereign prescription in Galen" Cor. II. 1. 127. The verbiage of the whole scene is medical,—fever of revenge, paralysis of manliness, dropsical affections with their distempered humours, cloyed sensations with embarrassed digestion, purging medicines, sovereign flower,—and forms a close associational link between this and the preceding scene. This constant recurrence to medical phraseology clearly reflects Shakspeare's conception of Macbeth's mind as 'diseased.'

## ACT V

## SCENE II

25—31

CATHNES

Well, march we on,  
To give obedience where 't is truly ow'd:  
Meet we the med'cine of the sickly weale,  
And with him poure we in our countries purge  
Each drop of us.

LENOX

Or so much as it needes  
To dew the soveraigne flower and drowne  
the weeds.  
Make we our march towards Birnan.

EXEUNT MARCHING

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SCENE III

Scene III pictures Macbeth "sick at hart" in the midst of the disasters thickening round him, but nerving himself for the crisis and bringing back to us that former Macbeth which we became acquainted with at the beginning of the play. He shows a new imperiousness born of a rule by force and fear—Seyton, send out! Doctor, how's your patient?—a new testiness, the fruit of nights of watching and days of dread—The divell damne thee blacke, thou cream-fac'd loone! Where got'st thou that goose-looke?—a new impatience springing from a feeling that his only means of safety lies in prompt action. With these there is the note of regret and a sense of the vanity of a life which has yielded him nothing that he had hoped for, though it has granted everything that he asked of it. But in spite of these, the new Macbeth is the old Macbeth; and as he returns to the sphere of bold, resolute action, throwing aside the ill-fitting robe of duplicity and indirectness worn during his later years, he seems in a measure to regain his original freedom and his original nobility. As he himself puts it, they have tied him to a stake, but he will fight the course.



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

In this tragedy of misguided force Shakspeare never for a moment allows his Hercules to show weakness: he never whines. In his moment of deepest despair he recovers himself by his own self-contempt. Play the Roman fool? Not he!

## SCENE III: A ROOM IN THE CASTLE ENTER MACBETH DOCTOR AND ATTENDANTS

I - IO

MACBETH

**B**RING me no more reports; let  
them flye all:  
Till Byrnane wood remove to  
Dunsinane,  
I cannot taint with feare. What's  
the boy Malcolme?  
Was he not borne of woman? The spirits  
that know  
All mortall consequences have pronounc'd  
me thus:  
'Feare not, Macbeth; no man that's borne  
of woman  
Shall ere have power upon thee.' Then fly,  
false thanes,  
And mingle with the English epicures:  
The minde I sway by and the heart I beare  
Shall never sagge with doubt nor shake with  
feare.

motion is therefore similar to that of I.3.18 and 23, 'fear cannot dry his blood and waste his marrow till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane.' He is as strong as ever he was: what is the boy Malcolm to oppose him? ¶4 SPIRITS, monosyllabic 'sprites' as usual. ¶5 CONSEQUENCES, 'what follows,' 'the future,' cp. note to I.7.3. PRONOUNC'D in EL.E. may mean 'proclaimed,' but the word is probably used intransitively with ME as the EL. ethical dative, cp. note to III.6.41. The verse seems to be an alexandrine, and as such has a peculiar impressiveness in its onward flowing rhythm. ¶7 UPON is used in its sense of 'over,' cp. "command upon me" in III.1.17. The verse has an extra impulse before the cæsura, aptly marking the transition in the thought. ¶8 The contemptuous reference to the ENGLISH EPICURES is probably due to Holinshed, p. 180 (ed. Bothwell-Stone, p. 42), as pointed out by Stevens: "For manie of the people, abhorring the riotous manners and superfluous gormandizing brought in among them by the Englishmen, were willing inough to receive this Donald for their king, trusting, because he had beene brought up . . in the Iles . . without tast of the English likerous delicats, . . they should . . recover again the former temperance of their old progenitors." "Epicure" in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is used for 'one who gives himself up to sensual

The scene opens with Shakspeare's graphic directness: the attendants have brought word that the nobles are deserting Macbeth; he will not hear such news. ¶1 FLYE ALL, not 'let them all fly' but 'let them fly in a body'; "all" in EL.E. is frequently used as an adverb meaning 'as a whole,' cp. "where so ever the mind is busied there it is all" Florio's Montaigne, I.38. ¶3 TAINT has been taken exception to and 'faint' proposed as a substitute; modern editors usually retain "taint," explaining it as meaning 'become corrupted.' But fear does not corrupt. In EL.E., however, "taint" means 'wither,' cp. "failing of that moisture it flags, tainteth (withereth) and by and by drieth away" Comenius, 'Janua' 106. Macbeth's

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

pleasure.' This sense has given rise to our MN. meaning of the word. ¶9 SWAY BY, 'govern by,' 'hold my prestige by,' cp. "And, Henry, had'st thou sway'd as kings should do, Or as thy father and his father did, Giving no ground unto the house of Yorke, They then had never sprung like sommer flyes" 3Hen.6 II.6.14, and Coles's glosses, "sway, *guberno, impero*," "to sway with one, *prævaleo*." ¶10 SAGGE 'is glossed by Kersey "to hang down by one side," and the word is still used in the United States of anything that bends under a heavy weight. "A sagging gait" is EL.E. for 'slouching,' and since "sway" also means 'advance' in EL.E., Shakspeare may have had in mind the unsteady and vacillating gait of an old man. BEARE rhymes with FEARE in EL.E., cp. note to I.I.6. The rhythm, with its strong monosyllabic impulses, is peculiarly confident.

¶11 LOONE seems to have been a Scottish term of abuse in Shakspeare's day; it occurs in Patten's account of the Duke of Somerset's march into Scotland, ed. Arber, p. 114. ¶12 GOOSE-LOOK: cp. "this goose, you see, puts downe his head before there be anything neere to touch him" Sidney's *Arcadia*, III. 237 (cited in N.E.D.). ¶13 THERE IS: the singular verb with "there" followed by a plural complement is common EL. idiom. ¶15 PATCH is an EL. word for 'fool.' Moth plays upon it in L.L.L. IV.2.32, "So were there a patch set on learning to see him in a schoole."

¶16 DEATH OF THY SOULE! illustrates the use of the word "death" in imprecations like "Death and damnation!" Oth. III. 3.396. LINNEN, i.e. white; Cl. Pr. cites "Their cheekes are paper" from Hen.5 II.2.74. WHAY is a common EL. spelling of 'whey.'

¶19 The repeated "Seyton!—Seyton, I say!" interjected into Macbeth's soliloquy graphically pictures the rash impatience of his mind. The FO. punctuates with a comma after SEYTON in both instances. ¶20 BEHOLD has a number of intransitive uses in EL.E.,—cp. N.E.D.8,—and it may mean 'stop to consider,'—'when I face this crisis.' ¶21 CHEERE and the FO.'S "dis-eate me now" have caused great difficulty: many editors assume that "dis-eate" is a printer's error for the "disease" of FO.2 used in its EL. sense of 'trouble,' 'vex'; but were that the meaning it would be "trouble me ever," not "trouble me now," for disease suggests continuous action. Besides, the emendation is

## ACT V

## SCENE III

II—19

ENTER SERVANT

The divell damne thee blacke, thou cream-fac'd loone!

Where got'st thou that goose-looke?

SERVANT

There is ten thousand—

MACBETH

'Geese,' villaine?

SERVANT

Souldiers, sir.

MACBETH

Go pricke thy face and over-red thy feare,  
Thou lilly-liver'd boy. What soldiers, patch?  
Death of thy soule! those linnen cheekes of  
thine

Are counsailers to feare. What soldiers,  
whay-face?

SERVANT

The English force, so please you.

MACBETH

Take thy face hence.

EXIT SERVANT

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

weak and the word 'disease' has no relation to PUSH. Other emendations are 'disseize' and 'defeat,' equally unsatisfactory. The words taken just as they stand, allowing for the possibility of a somewhat anomalous spelling in CHEERE and DIS-EATE, give a better sense than any of the alterations proposed. "Cheere" may easily be a confusion of spelling between "cheere" and "chaire"; the two words seem to have had the same pronunciation in EL. E., "cheere" probably still retaining its open *e* alongside of the newer *i*. N. E. D.

## ACT V SCENE III 19-29

Seyton!—I am sick at hart,  
When I behold—Seyton, I say!—this push  
Will cheere me ever, or dis-seate me now.  
I have liv'd long enough: my way of life  
Is falne into the seare, the yellow leafe;  
And that which should accompany old-age,  
As honor, love, obedience, troopes of friends,  
I must not looke to have; but in their steed,  
Curses, not lowd but deepe, mouth-honor,  
breath  
Which the poore heart would faine deny, and  
dare not.  
Seyton!

under the substantive records "chaire" as a seventeenth-century spelling of "cheere," and the confusion may well have worked the other way. "Chair" frequently means 'throne' in EL. E.; "chaired or stalled" is glossed *cathedratus* in Holyoke; and cp. "is the chayre emptie? . . . Is the king dead? Rich. 3. IV. 4. 470. "Chair" in the sense 'enthroned' exactly fits the context, for Macbeth, already on the throne, adds EVER, which is EL. E. for 'forever,' 'for the rest of my life,' cp. "Let me live here ever" Temp. IV. I. 123. PUSH as a verb we have already had in a similar connection in III. 4. 82, "push us from our stooles"; the noun also means 'test' or 'issue' in EL. E., cp. "Wee'l put the matter to the present push" Ham. V. I. 318, and "What propugnation is in one man's valour To stand the push and enmity of those This quarrell would excite?" Tro. & Cr. II. 2. 136. DIS-SEATE, 'unseat,' cp. "the hot horse . . . seekes to dis-seate his lord" Two Noble Kinsmen, V. 4. 72—the hyphen is significant. Macbeth's words, therefore, mean, 'This crisis will either establish me on the throne for the rest of my life or unking me at once.' THIS PUSH could well be the object of BEHOLD were it not for the FO. punctuation, "behold: Seyton, I say, this push," etc., for the EL. relative pronoun is frequently omitted in M. E. and E. N. E. even in restrictive clauses where MN. E. sense requires it, cp. "Haply I see a friend will save my life" Err. V. I. 283, and "The way is danger leadeth to thy cell" Drayton, 'Duke of Normandie,' p. 417. Such an interpretation gives unity to Macbeth's words and reflects into them a moody despondency like that of V. 5. 23: 'I am sick at heart when I behold this fierce opposition which will establish me in perpetuity upon my throne or remove me from it now. For I have lived long enough, etc.,' i.e. the game is scarce worth the candle. ¶ 22 For WAY OF LIFE Johnson proposed 'May of life' to avoid what he thought confusion of metaphor; but for a 'May to fall into the yellow leaf' is a notion more confused than that of Shakspeare's words. WAY in EL. E. means 'course'; Steevens cited the phrase "way of life" from Per. I. I. 54, "Thus ready for the way of life or death"; cp., too, "Hee's walk'd the way of nature" 2 Hen. 4 V. 2. 4. ¶ 23 IS FALNE: "To fall in age" is the idiom cited from Palsgrave, 1530, in N. E. D.; the phrase "fall into" was used with a wide range of application in EL. E. to describe 'persons passing into some specified condition, bodily or mental,' N. E. D. 38. SEARE, 'withered,' 'dry,' is now only poetic, cp. "deformed, crooked, old, and sere" Err. IV. 2. 19. ¶ 27 After BREATH modern editors add a comma not in FO. I; but in Macbeth's thought "which" seems to refer only to "breath" and not to "mouth-honor":



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

the word in EL. E. often means 'flattery,' cp. "publicke fame or private breath" Wotton, 1639 (cited in N. E. D. 4 c), and "commends and courteous breath" Merch. II. 9. 90. ¶ 28 DENY is used in its EL. E. sense of 'refuse.' As has been pointed out by Clark, this soliloquy is one of the long-time suggestions in Macbeth. Coming in as it does between the two impatient calls for Seyton, his only faithful noble, it gives us a glimpse of the man's loneliness, and, without delaying the action, awakens sympathy for him in the crisis that is approaching.

## ACT V SCENE III 30-39

ENTER SEYTON

SEYTON

What's your gracious pleasure?

MACBETH

What newes more?

SEYTON

All is confirm'd, my lord, which was reported.

MACBETH

I 'le fight till from my bones my flesh be hackt.  
Give me my armor.

SEYTON

'T is not needed yet.

MACBETH

I 'le put it on.  
Send out moe horses; skirre the country  
round;  
Hang those that talke of feare. Give me  
mine armor.  
How does your patient, doctor?

DOCTOR

Not so sicke, my lord,  
As she is troubled with thicke-comming  
fancies,  
That keepe her from her rest.

¶ 30 MORE, 'further,' cp. III. 4. 137. ¶ 33 French in his 'Shakespeareana Genealogica' (cited in Furness's Variorum) says that the Setons of Touch were hereditary armour-bearers to the kings of Scotland. ¶ 35 MOE is a comparative M. E. form used as a noun with the partitive genitive following which survived into e. N. E. SKIRRE is a phonetic spelling of 'scur,' an EL. word meaning 'to flit,' 'pass hurriedly over'; it is used by Jonson (cp. Cent. Dict. s.v.) and by Fletcher, "the light shadows That in a thought scur o'er the fields of corn" Bonduca I. 1 (cited by Steevens). ¶ 36 MINE: an EL. form of the pronoun frequent before a word beginning with a vowel. ¶ 37 Macbeth's quick turning to the doctor to ask how his patient is getting on aptly brings the thought of Lady Macbeth into the action. The doctor probably enters while Macbeth is talking to Seyton, though the FO. puts his entrance at the beginning of the scene; for it is hardly likely that Macbeth would ignore the doctor in the soliloquy, and there is no occasion for his appearance in the action before this point. His coming in here to report on Lady Macbeth's condition would naturally bring out Macbeth's question. Had he been on the stage before, Shakspeare would probably have assumed that Macbeth knew about the "thicke-comming fancies." As it is, the doctor probably comes to tell the king of what he saw in Scene I, but the imperative interruption, "Cure her of that," and the impatient demand that follows, prevent him from communicating his news. The simple inquiry with its homely phrasing indicates a deep concern for Lady Macbeth; but here, as in II. 3. 124, a selfish indifference has been read into Macbeth's words. Englishmen do not sentimentalize in a crisis such as Macbeth is in; and a German inference

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

of Macbeth's selfishness because he does not express to the doctor his love and anxiety is apt to be misleading. His brusque 'How's your patient, doctor?' is the truest note of his anxiety that he could give. ¶ 39 REST, i.e. sleep, was the recognized remedy for

ACT V SCENE III 39-46

MACBETH

Cure her of that.  
Can'st thou not minister to a minde diseas'd,  
Plucke from the memory a rooted sorrow,  
Raze out the written troubles of the braine,  
And with some sweet oblivious antidote  
Cleanse the stufft bosome of that perillous  
stuffe  
Which weighes upon the heart?

DOCTOR

Therein the patient  
Must minister to himselfe.

insanity in Shakspeare's time, and Macbeth knows from his own experience what loss of sleep means.

¶ 39 FO.1 prints "Cure of that," but the rhythm points to the loss of a word, and the "her" of FO.2 is probably the right one. As CURE in EL.E. means 'to treat medically,' cp. IV.3.215, Macbeth's direction is 'treat her for that.' The doctor probably makes some gesture of dissent here, indicating that the trouble is past curing, and leading to Macbeth's question, half soliloquy, half complaint at the impotence of science. Plato's maxim, in the form "*cuncta mala cor-*

*poris ab animo procedunt, quæ nisi curentur corpus curari minime potest*," was an axiom of current medical practice which Shakspeare probably had in mind when he wrote these oft-quoted words. Burton in citing it adds: 'Yea, but you will here infer that this is an excellent good indeed if it could be done; but how shall it be effected, by whom, what art, what means? *hic labor, hic opus est*.' ¶ 40 MINISTER here and in v. 46 was probably syncopated to 'min'ster'; cp. "And minister in their steeds [i.e. steeds]" Timon IV.1.6, and "keep in awe Your gelded ministers; shall I yelde accompe Of what I doe to you?" Massinger's Believe as you List, I.2. The word is used in EL.E. in the sense of 'prescribe,' cp. "you gave me bitter pills, And I must minister the like to you" Two Gent. II.4.149. ¶ 41 'Sorrow,' says Burton, 'is a sole cause of madness' . . . 'If it take root once it ends in despair' I.ii.3.5. ¶ 42 RAZE OUT, 'erase,' cp. 'razing out one name and putting in another' Jonson, 'Bart. Fair' v.2. ¶ 43 OBLIVIOUS, 'causing forgetfulness,' 'soporific,' cp. Milton's "oblivious pool" Par. Lost, I.263 (cited in Cent. Dict.). ANTI-DOTE: cp. Minsheu, "a medicine given against venime . . . *veneni propulsatorium*, i.e. a driver away of venome"; this driving away or purging notion of the word seems to have been in Shakspeare's mind. ¶ 44 STUFFT, 'crammed full,' the usual EL. meaning of the word; Comenius speaks of a "stomach stuffed or cramm'd full," so here it is the heart 'clogged with troubles' that Macbeth is asking the doctor to purge. PERILLOUS is syncopated to 'per'lous' in EL.E., cp. "So hard and perlous to be brought to passe" Drayton's Barrons Warres, III.30.4. Macbeth thinks of the diseased soul as an overlaid stomach that must be purged: "*strangulat inclusus dolor atque exæstuat intus*," as current medical parlance, citing Ovid, had it. Such repetitions of a word as we have here are very frequent in Shakspeare and the best EL. writers, and give no occasion for the numerous emendations that have been proposed for "stuffe." ¶ 45 The doctor's reply echoes the medical notion of Shakspeare's times. Burton says that in these cases of minds diseased 'from the patient himself the first and chiefest remedy must be had' II.61. The words which follow are Macbeth's attempt to dismiss the matter. Remedy, if there is one, lies in action, not in brooding. He can at least fight—"fight the course,"

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

as he says later: he is still sure of winning. A wave of loneliness comes over him as he says, "Doctor, the thanes flye from me"—the rats are leaving the sinking ship; but he puts the thought aside with a jest, turning the 'suffering country' into terms of medical diagnosis. All through the passage his impatience keeps breaking out in petulance—"Come, sir, quick!" "No, take it off!" "Bring it along after me!"

¶ 48 The STAFFE was the shaft of the spear, and is in Shakspeare frequently used for the spear itself. But it may also be the royal sceptre of authority, cp. "*gineta*, a captaines leading staffe" Percival. This latter meaning seems to be more appropriate to the context: Macbeth fights with a sword in V.7.31 ff.

¶ 49 SEND OUT, 'send out messengers or scouts' as in III. 4. 129, Macbeth having in mind the "Send out moe horses" above. Delius, thinking the sentence unfinished, punctuated it as an anacoluthon. FO. I cuts off the words by semicolons. ¶ 50 The COME, SIR, DISPATCH! is addressed to Seyton or the attendant who is buckling on Macbeth's armour; likewise, the PULL 'T OFF, I SAY! (v. 54) is an impatient order to remove some piece of armour, probably the helmet—he will not be afraid, but will meet death full in front: BRING IT AFTER ME in v. 58 evidently refers to the same thing. Macbeth's repetition of DOCTOR, with its second demand for attention, graphically shows the medical man's nervousness. ¶ 51 The first step in seventeenth-century diagnosis was the examination—"casting"—of the diseased patient's urine. ¶ 52 PURGE is used in its general sense of 'cure.' ¶ 55 The "cyme" of FO. I seems to be an overlooked printer's error for CENNY, an EL. form of 'senne,' i.e. cassia, a purgative drug: cp. "the common purgation called *casia fistula*" Cooper; the words that follow fix the plant as a purgative, so that it is likely that the correction of FO. 2, "cæny," corresponds to Florio's spelling, "senie"; Turner spells the word "sene," Cotgrave "sene," defining it as 'a purge'; Boorde, p. 289,

## ACT V SCENE III 47-62

### MACBETH

Throw physicke to the dogs; I 'le none of it.  
—Come, put mine armour on; give me my staffe.

Seyton, send out.—Doctor, the thanes flye from me.—

Come, sir, dispatch!—If thou could'st, doctor, cast

The water of my land, finde her disease,  
And purge it to a sound and pristine health,  
I would applaud thee to the very eccho,  
That should applaud againe.—Pull 't off, I say!—

What rubarb, cenny, or what purgative drugges,  
Would scowre these English hence? hear'st thou of them?

### DOCTOR

I, my good lord; your royall preparation  
Makes us heare something.

### MACBETH

Bring it after me.

I will not be affraid of death and bane,  
Till Birnane forrest come to Dunsinane.

### DOCTOR

### ASIDE

Were I from Dunsinane away and cleere,  
Profit againe should hardly draw me heere.

### EXEUNT



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

spells it "seene," and gives it in a list of purgative medicines; Minsheu, who spells it "senie" and "sené," also notes its purgative qualities. The various emendations—'rhubarb-clysmes' Badham, 'sirrah' Bullock, 'ochyme' Seager—either lack point or require a commentary. PURGATIVE was probably syncopated in EL. E. ¶ 59 BANE is used in its EL. sense of destruction, N. E. D. 3. ¶ 61 The doctor is evidently perplexed; his interview has not turned out well. He had perhaps intended to let the king know that he is aware of the cause of Lady Macbeth's thick-coming fancies; he may even have had some brave notion of charging him with the murders of Duncan and Banquo. But in Macbeth's hands he is as wax. A pointed question, a curt order, a sharp arraignment of his profession, a jest on his practice, and the poor doctor is left helpless and alone, with no thought in his mind but to get away.

## SCENE IV: COUNTRY NEAR BIRNANE WOOD

DRUM AND COLOURS: ENTER MALCOLME SEYWARD

MACDUFFE SEYWARD'S SONNE MENTETH CATHNES ANGUS  
AND SOLDIERS MARCHING

I — 7

MALCOLME

COSINS, I hope the dayes are  
neere at hand

That chambers will be safe.

MENTETH

We doubt it nothing.

SEYWARD

What wood is this before us?

MENTETH

The wood of Birnane.

MALCOLME

Let every souldier hew him downe a bough  
And bear 't before him: thereby shall we  
shadow

The numbers of our hoast and make dis-  
covery

Erre in report of us.

SOLDIERS

It shall be done.

shadow their self love" J. Bradford, died 1555 (cited in Cent. Dict.). ¶ 6 DISCOVERY in EL. E. means 'information,' N. E. D. 4, and is the regular word for 'reconnaissance'; cp. "Here is the guesse of their true strength and forces By diligent discovery" Lear V. 1. 13 (in N. E. D. 3 b). ¶ 7 REPORT OF US, 'in reporting our numbers,' cp. note to III. 6. 37.

Scene IV continues the action of Scene II. ¶ 1 COSINS, the EL. use of the word in the sense of 'kinsmen,' cp. note to V. 2. 2. ¶ 2 CHAMBERS in EL. E. corresponds to MN. E. 'private rooms,' and hence the omission of 'our.' It also describes the residence of the king, N. E. D. 6, and Malcolm's words convey a reference to the murder of Duncan as well as to the conditions described in III. 6. 35. NOTHING, the EL. adverb. ¶ 5 THEREBY in EL. E. sometimes seems to have stress on its first element: see also Cor. V. 3. 133, 2 Hen. 6. II. 1. 187, L. L. L. IV. 3. 283, Meas. III. 1. 6. SHADOW in EL. E. is a regular word for 'conceal,' cp. "His nose being shadowed by his neighbour's eare" Lucr. 1416, and "they seek out all shifts that can be . . . to

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶8 NO OTHER BUT is EL. idiom for 'no one besides'; Macbeth is abandoned by his thanes. Delius took "no other" as 'not otherwise than,' giving the phrase the sense it bears in III.4.97; but such an interpretation makes Seyward's words rather pointless, as Malcolm's followers are probably already aware that Macbeth is at Dunsinane. CONFIDENT was probably syncopated to 'conf'dent' in EL.E., however harsh such syncopation may sound to modern ears; but there is no other clear instance of it in Shakspeare. The word sometimes means 'overbold' in EL.E., and probably has that meaning here. ¶9 AND WILL INDURE, 'and he means to hold out against': in M.E. and e.N.E. syntax the subject is frequently left unexpressed when it can be easily supplied from the context; and this idiom is found in

EL.E. even where a grammatical change of subject occurs without any pronoun being expressed. "Indure" here means 'withstand,' 'oppose,' not 'endure,' 'suffer,' see N.E.D. 3c. ¶10 SETTING DOWNE BEFORE is a regular EL.E. phrase for 'besieging.' MAINE is in wide use in EL.E. in the sense of 'chief'; in an effort to make the sense more apt in MN.E., 'vain' has been conjectured for "maine." ¶11 ADVANTAGE TO BE GIVEN is likewise unintelligible as MN.E., and various emendations of the phrase have been proposed: Johnson was for 'advantage to be gone,' others

read 'advantage to be got,' 'to be gotten,' 'to be ta'en,' 'to 'em given,' etc. But the evident word play on "given" speaks for the authenticity of the text, which makes good sense in EL.E. For "advantage" means 'opportunity,' 'chance,' in Shakspeare's time: see N.E.D.s.v., and cp. "The next advantage will we take" Temp. III.3.13; the use of the substantive verb in the sense of 'have to,' 'must needs,' has already been noted in II.1.43; cp. also "You know, sir, where I am to go and the necessitie [i.e. you know where I have to go and the reason]" Jonson's Poetaster, III.1. So here, 'where an opportunity for desertion has to be given [i.e. in the open field] his followers have abandoned him, so that he knows better than to risk battle outside his castle.' ¶12 MORE AND LESSE: the words are used in their EL. senses of 'great ones,' 'nobles,' and 'those of lower rank and station,' N.E.D. 2. HAVE GIVEN HIM THE REVOLT: "revolt" in EL.E. means 'desertion,' cp. "gravitie's revolt to wantonness" L.L.L. V.2.74; Comenius glosses "renegadoes, that turn Turks" by "revolters." "Given" in EL.E., as we have already seen (cp. note to I.3.119), expresses the notion of 'forcing one to accept,' and the phrase means force him to accept the consequences of their desertion; MN. idiom retains this association in 'to give one the slip.' ¶13 THINGS is applied to persons in EL.E. to connote an absence of volition; in I Hen.4 III.3.131 ff. the hostess resents Falstaff's use of the word "thing" in this sense of 'personality without will power,' and "beast" in the sense of 'personality without reasoning power': "I am no thing to thanke heaven on, I wold thou shouldst know it . . . Falst. . . Thou art a beast to say otherwise. Host. Say, what beast, thou knave, thou!" MN.E. in such phrases as 'poor thing' still retains this earlier shade of meaning. Shakspeare gives point to the word in the following line, 'whose love, as well as power of volition, is absent.'

## ACT V

## SCENE IV

8-14

### SEYWARD

We learne no other but the confident tyrant  
Keepes still in Dunsinane, and will indure  
Our setting downe befor 't.

### MALCOLME

'Tis his maine hope:  
For where there is advantage to be given,  
Both more and lesse have given him the  
revolt,  
And none serve with him but constrained  
things  
Whose hearts are absent too.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶ 14 CENSURES, 'judgements,' a common meaning of the word in EL. E. ¶ 15 ATTEND, 'wait for,' cp. "from thence he could attend small succour" Sidney's Arcadia, p. 256. TRUE in EL. E. is very frequently applied to things which are to be relied upon as well as to trustworthy persons, cp. "true complaint" Meas. V. 1. 24, "true sight" Sonn. CXLVIII. 2, "Your spirit is too true, your feares too certaine" 2Hen. 4. 1. 1. 92, and IV. 1. 122 of this play. PUT ON, cp. note to II. 3. 139. ¶ 16 INDUSTRIOUS, 'able,' 'efficient,' an e. N. E. meaning of the word that is now obsolete, see N. E. D. 1. This 'obscurely worded sentence' is obscure only in MN. E. Macduff, who has known what it is to be loyal to his king, rebukes

ACT V SCENE IV 14-21

MACDUFFE

Let our just censures  
Attend the true event, and put we on  
Industrious souldiership.

SEYWARD

The time approaches  
That will with due decision make us know  
What we shall say we have and what we  
owe.

Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes  
relate,

But certaine issue stroakes must arbitrate:  
Towards which advance the warre.

EXEUNT MARCHING

the somewhat harsh words of Malcolm about "constrained things" and Malcolm's implication that those who surround Macbeth have no affection for him by saying that they must suspend judgement until after the issue of the battle which will decide the matter, and must fight to the best of their ability for what they think to be the right. Seyward carries on the thought in the following lines. ¶ 18 SHALL, 'must.' HAVE AND . . . OWE, i.e. true hearts and rightful allegiance; the words are not 'pompous' or 'sententious,' but a natural assent to Macduff's caution. ¶ 19 SPECULATIVE was probably 'spec'ulative' in EL. E. RELATE, 'give utterance to,' cp. "I nill relate, action may Conveniently the rest convey"

Per. III. Gower 55; cp. also III. 4. 124. ¶ 20 ARBITRATE, 'decide,' 'determine,' a meaning now archaic, N. E. D. 2; the object is "certaine issue." ¶ 21 TOWARDS WHICH, i.e. the "certaine issue." WARRE in EL. E. is often equivalent to 'contest,' 'quarrel,' a meaning still preserved in modern phrases like 'war of words,' etc.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SCENE V

Scene V continues the action of Scene I and in a few brief words closes the drama of Lady Macbeth's life. Shakspeare does not tell us the manner of her death—we merely know that she dies amid the shrieking of women. Even when, at the end of the play, Malcolm refers to her tragic end, it is in the doubtful words, "Who, as 't is thought, by selfe and violent hands Tooke off her life." Already we have had the physician warning the nurse against a probable attempt by Lady Macbeth at self-destruction—"Remove from her the meanes of all annoyance." But this fear of the doctor's, the "cry of women," and Malcolm's suspicion are the only hints we get of the manner of her end. In Act III Shakspeare begins to draw our attention away from Lady Macbeth to her husband; she does not appear at all in Act IV; and in the first scene of Act V she stalks through the action as a spirit that has already gone to her doom. In this way he gives to the tragedy a unity of interest



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

which it would not otherwise possess. For a double interest is a divided interest, and had Lady Macbeth remained as prominent in the last half of the play as she was in the first half, the fatal end of the fury-driven, vision-haunted Macbeth would have lacked the clearness and definiteness which, read back into his tragedy, gives to its long course in time, its varied changes of place, and its multitudinous action, an æsthetic completeness and singleness of purpose which far transcend the mechanical unities of classic drama.

## SCENE V: DUNSINANE: WITHIN THE CASTLE

ENTER MACBETH SEYTON AND SOULDIER WITH DRUM  
AND COLOURS

I-8

MACBETH



ANG out our banners on the  
outward walls;  
The cry is still, 'They come': our  
castle's strength  
Will laugh a siedege to scorne:  
heere let them lye

Till famine and the ague eate them up:  
Were they not forc'd with those that should  
be ours,  
We might have met them darefull, beard to  
beard,  
And beate them backward home.

A CRY WITHIN OF WOMEN  
What is that noyse?

SEYTON

It is the cry of women, my good lord.

EXIT SEYTON

Macbeth's first words not only express his defiance of Malcolm's forces, but keep before us the action of Scene IV, with which this is continuous. ¶2 CRY in EL.E. may mean 'report,' 'rumour,' N.E.D. 7. STILL, 'always.'

¶3 LYE is the regular word in EL.E. for the encampment of an army, cp. N.E.D. 5 b and the quotation from Halle's Chronicle, "The kyng lay before Bullein and was like to have conquered the same."

¶5 FORC'D is an e.N.E. verb meaning 'reinforced,' 'strengthened,' N.E.D. 13, and not an error for 'farced.' OURS, 'belonging on our side,' cp. the note to I.7.26.

¶6 DAREFULL, cp. "Not by the prowesse of his owne darefull hand" Sylvester (cited in N.E.D. s.v.).

¶7 A CRY WITHIN OF WOMEN illustrates the word order noted in III.6.48. The word "cry" seems to be used in the sense of 'scream,' 'clamour,' 'outcry,' N.E.D. 6; in this sense it is not illustrated in N.E.D. after 1440, but Phr. Gen. gives "they set up a cry, *clamorem sustulerunt*"; "to confuse all things with hideous noise and cry, *omnia tumultu et vociferatione concutere*": this is exactly the sense the context requires. NOYSE also refers to 'clamour,' 'outcries,' in EL.E., cp. "a lamentable noise or crie, *flebilis fremitus*" Baret's Alvearie. ¶8 Seyton's words show that "cry" means 'shrieking.' He probably leaves the stage to ascertain the cause of the outcries, but no EXIT here or at v. 16 and no ENTRANCE at v. 15 are marked in the FO.

¶10 MY SENCES WOULD HAVE COOL'D: the effect of fear is usually thought of as chilling the blood, cp. "freeze thy young blood" Ham. I.5.16, and "the bloud waxing colde for feare" Baret's Alvearie. "Sences": in EL. psychology the mind was thought of as con-

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

sisting of 'outer senses' (MN. 'sensations') and the 'inner senses' (common sense, judgement, memory, imagination). Spirits in the blood, 'the spirits of sense,' ministered to these. Shakspeare often uses "senses" for the 'spirits of sense,' cp. L.L.L. II. I. 240, 242, and Temp. V. I. 66, and perhaps that is the notion here. "Cool" is a stronger word in EL. E.

ACT V SCENE V 9-16

MACBETH

I have almost forgot the taste of feares:  
The time has beene my sences would have  
cool'd

To heare a night-shrieke; and my fell of  
haire

Would at a dismall treatise rowze and stirre  
As life were in't: I have supt full with horrors;  
Direnesse, familiar to my slaughterous  
thoughts,

Cannot once start me.

RE-ENTER SEYTON

Wherefore was that cry?

SEYTON

The queene, my lord, is dead.

EXIT SEYTON

menos': 'my bark is full fraught with horrors.' ¶ 14 SLAUGHTEROUS THOUGHTS, 'murderous impulses,' cp. "Such butchers as yourselves never want A colour to excuse your slaughterous mind" Heywood's Edward IV (cited in Cent. Dict.); see also note to I. 3. 139. ¶ 15 START, 'make to tremble,' cp. note to V. I. 50. Macbeth's familiarity with fear dates, of course, from the murder of Duncan; before that he 'knew not the taste of fears,' see I. 3. 30 ff. Yet, as in these words of self-revelation he reviews the horror of his reign, it reflects itself over the whole of his life, and the time when he would start at the owl's shriek (cp. II. 2. 16), or be frightened at a woman's story at a winter's fire (cp. III. 4. 65), seems long ago. ¶ 16 Seyton's answer, brief, respectful, sounds like the announcement of an executed doom.

Macbeth's words that follow have given rise to much comment. Taken as they stand and read as EL. E., they mean: 'She must necessarily have died sometime; there must have come a time when I should have to hear this message of her doom. But we always think of death as something that must happen to-morrow, never to-day.' ¶ 17 SHOULD, 'must necessarily have,' cp. note to II. 3. 127 where the notion of fittingness is implied, and note to IV. 3. 20 where the notion of something necessary is involved. HEEREAFTER: somewhat less definite than in MN. E., cp. Lady Macbeth's "the all-haile hereafter" I. 5. 56. ¶ 18 WOULD, 'must inevitably have been,' cp. note to III. I. 51. Ignoring this notion of necessity which the EL. auxiliaries convey, many have commented on the selfishness of Macbeth's words. But it is because Macbeth has supped full of horrors that death now becomes an insignificant fact in life; he thinks life itself is meaningless delusion, and why

than in MN. E. and translates *frigesco* in the Latin dictionaries of the time. Cl. Pr. cites "Least [i.e. lest] zeale . . Coole and congeale againe to what it was" John II. I. 477. ¶ 11 NIGHT-SHRIEKE, 'the hooting of the night owl,' cp. "night-owl's shriek" Rich. 2 III. 3. 183. FELL, 'a covering of hair or wool,' N. E. D. 3; the phrase "fell of haire" is used in EL. E. for 'scalp covered with hair.' ¶ 12 DISMALL, 'disastrous,' 'tragic,' cp. note to I. 2. 53. TREATISE is a common EL. word for 'story,' 'narration,' cp. "Your treatise makes me like you worse and worse" Ven. & Ad. 774. ¶ 13 AS, 'as if,' cp. note to I. 4. 11. WITH means 'on' and goes with SUPT, cp. note to IV. 2. 32. Macbeth, in the depths of his despair, utters words like those of Hercules in 'Heracles Mainomenos'.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

should one bother about ending it sooner or later? A TIME, i.e. a fitting time, cp. "Though you heare now, too late, yet nowe's a time" Timon II. 2. 152. ¶ 19 The bitterness of Macbeth's words, with their iterating rhythm, 'x' " || " 'x' " || " 'x' " , may have been intensified by a heart-sickness at his always deferred hope of cheating Banquo's line of the fulfilment of the witches' prophecy. Now at last the to-morrows are ended and there is no hope more. Banquo has triumphed, all the long fight has been for nothing, 'to be nothing,' a mere cipher in time's annals—"time's fool." TO MORROW: Halliwell thought that an engraving in Barclay's Ship of Fooles, 1570, representing a fool with crows sitting on his cap and on each hand and the word *cras* written above each one, may have suggested the notion of to-morrows lighting fools the way to dusty death. The passage which this illustrates is:

They folowe the crows crye to their great sorowe:  
'Cras,' 'cras,' 'cras,' to morowe we shall amende,  
And if we mende not then, then shall we the next morowe;  
Or els shortly after we shall no more offende.  
Amende, mad foole, when God this grace doth sende.

It may be worth noting that in Old and Middle High German an *r* was heard in the caw of the crow, giving the form *craa* for 'caw.' The word "craw" is also found in English for the caw of a crow, see N.E.D. s.v. ¶ 20 PETTY in EL.E. has a wider range of use than in MN.E. in the sense

which we still preserve in 'petty felony' and in 'petty jury,' and does not necessarily connote annoyance. Co-menius calls a primary school a "petty schoole"; Coles glosses the word by *paruus*, *exiguus*; cp. also "petty artire [artery]" Ham. I. 4. 82, "petty present" Ant. & Cl. I. 5. 45. PACE: cp. "a pace or manner of going, *incessus*" Phr. Gen. ¶ 21 TO in EL. expressions of time is often used where MN.E. prefers 'until'; cp. "being two houres to day" Merch. V. I. 303, and "For since the birth of Caine, the first male-childe, To him that did but yesterday suspire" John III. 4. 79. RECORDED TIME: a similar notion of the course of the world as being a book of record occurred in II. 4. 2. ¶ 22 LIGHTED in EL.E. is

## ACT V SCENE V 17-28

### MACBETH

She should have dy'de heereafter;  
There would have beene a time for such a word.

To morrow, and to morrow, and to morrow,  
Creepes in this petty pace from day to day  
To the last syllable of recorded time,  
And all our yesterdayes have lighted fooles  
The way to dusty death. Out, out, breefe candle!

Life's but a walking shadow, a poore player  
That struts and frets his houre upon the stage

And then is heard no more: it is a tale  
Told by an ideot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing.

a common synonym of 'guided': one needs only to think of the London of Shakspeare's day, with its link-boys, to appreciate the association. ¶ 23 DUSTY is taken by Steevens as a reference to the 'dust to dust' of the burial service. Collier cites Anthonie Copley's A Fig for Fortune, 1596 (Sp. Soc., p. 49), "Time and the grave did first salute thy nature, Inviting it to dustie death's defeature"; the same notion is found in "Death is the drearie



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

dad and dust the dame Of all flesh-frailtie" Bodenham's Belvedere, p. 231, citing a near-by verse of Copley's. "Dust" in M.E. and e.N.E. connoted 'worthlessness,' 'emptiness,' N.E.D. sb. 1, 3 d, and this association attached to "dusty" in EL.E.; in Tro.&Cr. III.2.195 we have the same notion, "mightie states characterlesse are grated To dustie nothing." For the notion of THE WAY TO DEATH, cp. "This way to death my wretched sonnes are gone" Titus III.1.98. Shakspeare may have had in mind the words in Florio's Montaigne, I.xix, "All daies march toward death." As Macbeth reviews his own empty yesterdays of promises kept to his ear and broken to his hope, he bitterly says, 'All men are fools and life an idiot's tale!' From the notion of light he passes to that of a candle; much the same notions are linked in "Heere burnes my candle out; I, heere it dies, Which whiles it lasted gave King Henry light" 3Hen.6 II.6.1. ¶ 24 WALKING in EL.E. is used of the stalking movements of spirits or spectres,—cp. note to V.1.3,—and SHADOW is applied to any spectral illusion; Guildenstern's words, Ham. II.2.262, that the substance of ambition is the shadow of a dream, contain the same notion of haunting unreality. The thought of this unreality of life leads Macbeth on to the notion of the stage-player, and recalls that proud moment, years ago, when he heard himself hailed as king to be. Then it was the happy prologue, the swelling act, the imperial theme: the play is over now, with its hour of strut and fret, and the poor actor is to be heard no more. This last is the bitter drop in the cup Macbeth is draining—"no son of his succeeding," the dynastic hope now shattered and all that he has sacrificed his soul for gone for naught. ¶ 26 The thought of the actor's strutting and fretting leads on to that of an idiot's tale full of sound and fury; the association of life and a tale is found also in John III.4.108, "Life is as tedious as a twice-told tale Vexing the dull eare of a drowsie man"; but here Macbeth's bitterness intensifies the figure. The nineteenth chapter of the first book of Florio's Montaigne is full of similar notions and may have suggested the verbiage of this passage: "being faire and gently led on by her hand in a slow and as it were unperceived descent by little and little, and step by step ['the petty pace'], she roules us into that miserable state and day by day seeks to acquaint us with it." The player notion is also found here: "He hath plaied his part. . . Make room for others, as others have done for you."

The rhythm of this passage shows the marvellous capabilities of English stress to reflect action: "have lighted foöles The wáy to dústy deáth," with its firm and regular forward movement, pictures to the mind the action the words describe. "Oút, oút, breëfe cándle," reflects the act that Macbeth intends. In "Life's but a wáking shádw, á poöre pláyér" the long waves in "life," "walking," "poore," add to the notion of stalking that the rhythm expresses. In "strúts and fréts," with its short, explosive impulses, we have a picture of the actor himself. "And thén is héárd nŏ móre" with the long secondary impulse on "no" and the lingering stress on "more," is full of pathos. The reversals, short and quick, in "it is a tále, Tóld by an ídeöt," suggesting inconsequence of thinking; "fúll of sóund and fúry," with its swelling wave closing in an unstressed impulse; "Signífyng nóthing," with its bold start and its impotent conclusion recalling the inconclusive rhythms of Hamlet—all these adaptations of the verse to the thought show Shakspeare's marvellous command over the resources of English rhythm.

Macbeth is evidently on the point of suicide. The double imperative "Out, out, breefe candle!" clearly points to action (cp. V.1.38); the words cannot mean that Lady Macbeth's candle is out, or that Macbeth wishes that life's candle might be extinguished. The only construction that can be put upon them is that of an immediate purpose to take his life.—Like Hercules, when he realizes the utter hopelessness of the future, when he sees his life as behind him and no longer as in a vision before, he will destroy himself. The impatient words he speaks upon the entrance of the messenger likewise point to this action as that intended by Shakspeare,—“Thou com'st to use thy tongue” meaning that the messenger is dazed by the scene his eyes present to him and is helplessly staring at what he sees. ‘Thou com'st to use thy tongue, not thine eyes. Why stand'st thou there staring like a fool? Thy story quickly!’

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

¶ 30 The messenger excuses himself by the strangeness of his news. GRACIOUS MY LORD: for the word order cp. III.2.27. ¶ 31 SHOULD, 'must,' 'am obliged to,' as in v. 17. I SAY, 'I declare'; the

words were objected to by Keightley as 'needless,' and stricken out to make 'good metre.' ¶ 32 SAY is used absolutely in its EL. connotation of 'tell,' cp. "Cor. First heare me speake. Tribs. Well, say" Cor. III. 3. 41. ¶ 34 ANON ME THOUGHT, 'presently it seemed to me that.'

¶ 36 ENDURE, 'suffer,' cp. v. 4.9. ¶ 37 MILE, like "hors," has no plural ending in O.E., and in e. N. E. retains this flexionless form which in vulgar English still survives, cp. note to II.4.14. ¶ 38 The rhythm is itself a threat—" ' ' ' ' .

¶ 39 NEXT still retained its original meaning of 'nearest' in EL. E. SHALL is changed to 'shalt' in MN. editions; but in EL. E. the apparently third personal ending -s is often attached to the second, and the forms "will" and "wilt," "shall" and "shalt," appear side by side. The FO. in Ant. & Cl. V. 2. 208 has "shall" for "shalt." ¶ 40 CLING, 'shrivel up,' cp. "That . . . clings not his guts with niggish fare" Surrey, Eccl. V (cited in N. E. D. 3 c); the word had this sense of 'shrivelling' in O. E. and M. E., but was used intransitively. SOOTH, 'truth,' still in archaic use. ¶ 42 PULL IN in EL. E., as in MN. E., has two meanings, 'to check' or 'restrain,' and 'to draw back.' Steevens took the former meaning. But it is difficult to think of Macbeth restraining resolution in this crisis, and coupling the restrained resolution with fear. Mason took the latter meaning, and cited Fletcher's Sea Voyage III. 1, "All my spirits, as if they had heard my passing-bell go for me, Pull in their powers and give me up to destiny." But "pull in" here reflects

ACT V SCENE V 29-46

ENTER A MESSENGER

Thou com'st to use thy tongue; thy story quickly.

MESSENGER

Gracious my lord,  
I should report that which I say I saw,  
But know not how to doo't.

MACBETH

Well, say, sir.

MESSENGER

As I did stand my watch upon the hill,  
I look'd toward Byrnane, and anon me thought

The wood began to move.

MACBETH

Lyar and slave!

MESSENGER

Let me endure your wrath, if 't be not so:  
Within this three mile may you see it coming;

I say, a moving grove.

MACBETH

If thou speak'st false  
Upon the next tree shall thou hang alive,  
Till famine cling thee: if thy speech be sooth,  
I care not if thou dost for me as much.  
I pull in resolution, and begin  
To doubt th' equivocation of the fiend  
That lies like truth: 'Feare not, till Byrnane wood

Do come to Dunsinane': and now a wood  
Comes toward Dunsinane.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

the EL. psychology of life—the spirits drawing in their vital instruments preparatory to death. This thought hardly suits the context, for Macbeth's "Arme, arme!" are not the words of one resigning himself to death. And that Macbeth pulls in his own resolution leaves the same difficulty as before. "Pull" may be the independent verb used in a sense not yet recorded for EL.E. Cent. Dict. quotes a passage from Fletcher where "pulled" seems to mean 'reduce,' 'abate': "His rank flesh shall be pulled with daily fasting." Or it may be a misprint. Johnson suggested "pall" in the sense of 'languish,' and the word makes even better sense than he dreamed: for "appale," "appall," have parallel meanings in EL.E.: either can mean 'to wax faint in any quality'; the words frequently, too, connote 'dismay,' see N.E.D. s.v. (One citation in N.E.D., dated 1450, is: "Yf theise men appall and lacke when you do call"; here the word, though a century earlier than Shakspeare, has the meaning 'lose heart or resolution.') Aphetic forms of "appall" are common in EL.E., see N.E.D. Johnson's "pall," therefore, would suggest in EL.E. the same notion that we have in Hamlet, III.1.84, "the native hew of resolution Is sicklied o're with the pale cast of thought [i.e. anxiety]." Or, again, the misprint may be for "dull" (a turned *d* in the FO. type would scarcely be distinguishable from a *p*). "Dull" in EL.E. is commonly associated with 'spiritlessness'; and a verb "to dull" in the sense of 'become stupid' is cited in N.E.D. from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries (the MN. instances seem to imply 'make leaden or dull in color'). The dictionary also records, s.v. 7, an absolute meaning of 'become listless,' but "he dradde [i.e. feared] moche of the forseid word and greatly dulled therewith" *Gesta Romanorum*, 1440, is its latest citation for this sense. Here, however, we have the association of 'dazed will' and 'fear,' and it is quite possible that this meaning survived in Shakspeare's time. (The next meaning of the word, i.e. to weary, is not illustrated in N.E.D. later than 1540, but was in current use in EL.E., see Baret's *Alvearie* and *Sonn.* CII.14.) Cooper gives "*obtorpesco*, to be very slow or dull: to faint for feare: to be benumbed with fear." Baret and Holyoke have the same gloss; cp., also, "to cause astonnedness or dullness of the members" and "a faint courage, a dull spirit" Baret's *Alvearie*, and "Dull not device by coldnesse and delay" *Oth.* II.3.394. The notion of 'dazed will'—for the "resolution" in EL.E. is the 'will power'—is just the one which fits the words that follow: the sudden and strange news that Macbeth hears dulls his will and shakes his faith in the witches. ¶ 43 DOUBT, 'fear,' 'become afraid of,' a common EL.E. meaning of the word. EQUIVOCATION: cp. note to II.3.12. Macbeth must have already felt the fear he voices here, else he would not have been so ready to

## ACT V SCENE V 46–52

Arme, arme, and out!

If this which he avouches does appeare,  
There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here.

I 'ginne to be a-weary of the sun,  
And wish th' estate o' th' world were now undon.

Ring the alarum bell! blow, winde! come,  
wracke!

At least wee 'ldye with harnesse on our backe.

EXEUNT

call the prophecies "equivocations." For the first time, too, he explicitly recognizes that he has been bargaining with Satan, a fact he has never allowed himself to look squarely in the face before.

¶ 47, 48, 49, 50 could hardly have been written by the same hand as that which wrote vv. 20–28, nor do the padded phrases, "does appeare," "now undon," sound like Shakspeare. ¶ 47 APPEARE, 'become visible,' but the word is almost as flat in EL.E. as it is in MN.E. ¶ 48 NOR . .

NOR, the EL. form of the 'neither . . nor' idiom. ¶ 49 A-WEARY OF THE SUN is an EL. phrase for *tædium vitæ*. ¶ 50 TH' ESTATE O' TH' WORLD WERE NOW UNDON,



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

after "Life . . is a tale Told by an ideot, full of sound and fury, Signifying nothing," sounds like a row of accepted emendations. ¶51 THE ALARUM BELL: cp. note to II.3.85. WRACKE, 'destruction': the word is still used in the phrase 'rack and ruin,' though its e.N.E. *w* has been lost. Macbeth here invokes the impending storm in the same mad fury that characterizes Lear's "Blow, windes and crack your cheeks; rage! blow!" III.2.1. ALARUM was probably syncopated to 'alarm' (both forms are common in EL.E.), for the normal stress of imperative and noun is ' '. ¶52 HARNESS: the M.E. and e.N.E. word for armour, still in archaic use.

## SCENE VI: DUNSINANE BEFORE THE CASTLE

DRUMME AND COLOURS: ENTER MALCOLME SEYWARD MACDUFFE  
AND THEIR ARMY WITH BOUGHES

1-10

MALCOLME

¶1 LEAVY is the normal form of M.E. "levi," and is common in e.N.E. MN.E. 'leafy' is made from the noun 'leaf.' ¶2 SHEW, 'disclose yourselves in your true form,' cp. I.3.54. ¶4 BATTELL from the fourteenth to the eighteenth centuries means a file or line of troops, *acies*, N.E.D.8. ¶5 TO DO, 'to be done,' cp. note to V.8.30. ¶6 ORDER is probably 'plan of battle' rather than 'command,' cp. "we put our men into order, *legiones instruximus*" Coles. ¶7 DO, 'if we do,' the M.E. subjunctive still current in EL.E. TO NIGHT seems to be a time suggestion placing the battle in the late afternoon. ¶9 GIVE THEM ALL BREATH, 'put breath into them,' 'make them speak.' ¶10 HARBINGERS, cp. note to I.4.45; the word retains its full form, CLAM'ROUS being syncopated. The EL. stage



OW neere enough: your leavy  
skreenes throw downe,  
And shew like those you are.  
You, worthy unkle,  
Shall with my cosin, your right  
noble sonne,  
Leade our first battell: worthy Macduffe and  
wee  
Shall take upon 's what else remaines to do,  
According to our order.

SEYWARD

Fare you well.  
Do we but finde the tyrant's power to night,  
Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.

MACDUFFE

Make all our trumpets speak; give them all  
breath,  
Those clamorous harbingers of blood and  
death.

EXEUNT

ALARUMS CONTINUED

direction ALARUMS usually denotes the din and noise of battle. CONTINUED here seems to mean 'continuous,' and the stage direction to represent the trumpet blasts challenging the defenders of the castle. The battle immediately follows, though Shakspeare represents it as well under way when Scene VII opens. The action of Scene VII is closely joined to that of Scene V: Macbeth was at first resolved to stand a siege; but on hearing the news of the moving wood he decided to put his fate at once to the test in an immediate sally. Scene VI forms the connecting link.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

## SCENE VII: THE BATTLEFIELD

ENTER MACBETH

I-12

MACBETH



HEY have tied me to a stake; I  
cannot flye,  
But beare-like I must fight the  
course. What's he  
That was not borne of woman?

Such a one  
Am I to feare, or none.

ENTER YOUNG SEYWARD

YOUNG SEYWARD

What is thy name?

MACBETH

Thou 'lt be affraid to heare it.

YOUNG SEYWARD

No; though thou call'st thy selfe a hotter  
name

Then any is in hell.

MACBETH

My name's Macbeth.

YOUNG SEYWARD

The divell himselfe could not pronounce a  
title

More hatefull to mine eare.

MACBETH

No, nor more fearefull.

YOUNG SEYWARD

Thou lvest, abhorred tyrant; with my sword  
I 'le prove the lye thou speak'st.

FIGHT AND YOUNG SEYWARD SLAINE

MACBETH

Thou wast borne of woman.

But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to  
scorne,

¶ 2 COURSE in EL.E. was the technical term for a round of fighting in the sport of bear-baiting. Gloucester uses the same figure in Lear III.7.54. Macbeth is pushed to the last extremity with but one prophecy to tie to, and is afraid that will turn out to have been equivocal. He repeats this over to himself, and, impatient to try its efficacy, gleefully welcomes young Seyward as a test, finishing him off with a satisfied 'Well, it held for once; thou wast born of woman.' WHAT'S, 'who is,' cp. note to II.3.21. ¶ 4 AM I TO FEARE, 'am I going to fear,' cp. note to II.1.43. ¶ 5 TO HEARE, 'at hearing,' the common EL. infinitive idiom. ¶ 7 THEN ANY IS, 'than any that is,' the EL. omitted relative. ¶ 10 LY-EST, 'ly'st,' as in IV.2.83, with ABHORRED three syllables. ¶ 11 Macbeth has now tested the prophecy, and in his words appears a fresh confidence.

¶ 15 BEEST, monosyllabic in EL.E., cp. "seest," II.4.5. ¶ 16 STILL, 'always.' ¶ 17 KERNES was frequently used in EL.E. for peasant soldiers, cp. I.2.13. ¶ 18 STAVES, 'spears,' cp. note to V.3.48. EITHER is frequently a monosyllable in EL.E.; this loss of intervocalic *th* occurs also in "thither" and "whether" ('whither,' cp. note to IV.2.73), which had forms "th'er" and "wh'er" in EL.E.; cp. "which

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

hath thine honour reft from thee and either by force of hand," etc., Peele's Sir Clyomon and Sir Clamydes, III. 73 (the poem is in septenarius verse), and "either well or yll according to thy [see note to IV. 1. 71] intent" Faire Em, V. 1. 25; cp., also, Cæs. IV. 1. 23, Rich. 3 I. 2. 64, etc. The THOU is probably not 'ungrammatical,' but in Macduff's mind the subject of some verb like 'must meet me.' ¶ 19 UNBATTERED: in an anticipation of the fierceness of the combat between him and Macbeth. ¶ 20 UNDEEDED: cp. "well educated of the king and proving nobly deeded" Albion's England, 377 (cited in N. E. D. s.v.). SHOULD'ST, 'must,' cp. note to II. 3. 127: the stress is, "Thère thõu shoùld'st bé." ¶ 21 CLATTER in EL. E. is applied to any clanging noise; cp. 'with clattering of cymbals' Comenius's Janua, 643. It also means the din of loud voices, N. E. D. 2; hence the "bruted" which follows. OF GREATEST NOTE: cp. III. 2. 44. ¶ 22 SEEMES BRUITED, 'seems to be announced,' the EL. participle construction in indirect discourse. ¶ 24 GENTLY here is usually interpreted as meaning 'without resistance,' 'without reluctance'; but no such meaning is given in N. E. D., and Schmidt's citation from Temp. I. 2. 298, "doe my spryting gently," is obviously an instance of the common EL. meaning of the word, viz. 'courteously.' It is possible that 'tamely' is the meaning, based upon the sense of "gentle" as used in I. 6. 3. REN-DRED, 'surrendered,' a common meaning of the word

ACT V SCENE VII 13-29

Brandish'd by man that 's of a woman borne.

EXIT

ALARUMS: ENTER MACDUFFE

MACDUFFE

That way the noise is. Tyrant, shew thy face!

If thou beest slaine and with no stroake of mine,

My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still.

I cannot strike at wretched kernes, whose armes

Are hyr'd to beare their staves: either thou, Macbeth,

Or else my sword with an unbattered edge I sheath againe undeeded. There thou should'st be;

By this great clatter, one of greatest note Seemes bruted. Let me finde him, Fortune, And more I begge not.

EXIT: ALARUMS

ENTER MALCOLME AND SEYWARD

SEYWARD

This way, my lord; the castle's gently rendred:

The tyrant's people on both sides do fight; The noble thanes do bravely in the warre; The day almost it selfe professes yours, And little is to do.

MALCOLME

We have met with foes That strike beside us.

SEYWARD

Enter, sir, the castle.

EXEUNT: ALARUM



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

in EL. E. In the past tense of verbs ending in *-en*, like "happen," and in *-er*, like "render," the *e* of the verb stem was often dropped; whether this represents an actual EL. form of these words or was merely a way of representing the vocalic character of the liquid or nasal has not yet been made clear. ¶ 25 means that the royal household is divided and that their half-heartedness practically amounts to fighting upon Malcolm's side. ¶ 26 DO BRAVELY is a common EL. phrase meaning to act in a highly creditable way; the phrase is not found in N. E. D. but depends on DO in the sense of 'behaving,' cp. "to doe or exercise: to beare, to behave, *gero*" Baret, "Do bravely, horse" Ant. & Cl. 1. 5. 22, and "see you do it bravely" Titus IV. 3. 113. WARRE, 'battle,' as in V. 4. 21. ¶ 27 DAY, 'battle,' cp. 1. 3. 38. ALMOST IT SELFE seems to go together, meaning 'of its own accord.' PROFESSES YOURS, 'declares for your party,' cp. "by the saint whom I professe" Meas. IV. 2. 191. ¶ 28 TO DO, 'to be done,' cp. V. 6. 5; the passive and active infinitives have the same form in I. M. E., due to the loss of final *-e* in the former idiom; some of these appear in EL. E., and one, 'is to let,' still survives. ¶ 29 BESIDE US, 'so as to miss us,' a meaning of the preposition now obsolete, cp. "oh, do him not the wrong to look beside him, for if you see him not he comes by to no purpose" Gaule, 1629 (cited in N. E. D. 4 a), and "to go besides or out of the right way," "the lot did fall besides the persons fit or meet, i.e. the lot happen'd to them that were nothing meet" Phr. Gen.

## ACT V SCENE VII 30-35

ENTER MACBETH

MACBETH

Why should I play the Roman foole, and  
dye

VIII. 1\*

On mine owne sword? Whiles I see lives, the  
gashes

Do better upon them.

ENTER MACDUFFE

MACDUFFE

Turne, hell-hound, turne!

MACBETH

Of all men else I have avoyded thee:

But get thee backe; my soule is too much  
charg'd

With blood of thine already.

VIII. 6

\* These figures indicate the Globe numeration.

At this point Dyce made a new scene division which the Cambridge Text follows. But the action is continuous with Macduff's words "Let me finde him." The actors come on and off the stage as the battle ebbs and flows, the reader's interest now with Malcolm's party, now with Macbeth's; but the main action is continuous: Scene V represents Macbeth's preparation for the struggle, Scene VI Malcolm's, Scene VII the battle itself. A necessary change of scene from the battle-field to the court of the castle occurs after Macbeth's death in v. 34 (see the introductory note to Scene VIII). To make a new scene here

with the place direction 'Another part of the plain' or 'Another part of the field' awkwardly interrupts the continuity of the battle with a gap in the action which the imagination finds it hard to fill. ¶ 30 PLAY THE ROMAN FOOLE: Macbeth contemptuously puts aside the temptation to take his own life when overwhelmed by disaster; the allusion is to the example of Brutus, Cassius, Antony, and Cato, familiar to Shakspeare's audience from the pages of Plutarch; Shakspeare calls suicide "a Roman's part" in Cæs. V. 3. 89. The fine strength of Macbeth comes out so clearly in these words that they go far to redeem him in his last appearance before us. ¶ 31 WHILES, 'while,' cp. note to 1. 5. 6. LIVES: in M. E. "life" often corresponds to M. N. E. 'person' and sometimes to 'body,' a usage still retained in such M. N. idioms as 'twenty lives were lost' and in 'life-guard,' i.e. body-guard. Shak-

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

spere seems to have used the word in this concrete sense here. Scholars have been wont to assume for Shakspeare a peculiar proneness to use abstract words in concrete senses, but the N.E.D. shows that Shakspeare's English is not unusual in this respect, being in most cases the reflection of the idiom of his time; most of the abstract significations of MN. E. words have developed out of earlier concrete significations. A good illustration of this is "gaze," v. 53 (see note). THE: 'its,' i.e. the gashes made by his sword. ¶ 32 DO BETTER, 'look better': the stress is "Dō bétter ūpon thém." HELL-HOUND: cp. note to II. 3. 2, and 'Down, hell-hound, down' Massinger's *Virgin Martyr*, V. 2. ¶ 33 OF ALL MEN ELSE, 'more than any one else,' cp. "he of all the rest hath never mov'd me [i.e. hath failed to move me]" *Two Gent.* I. 2. 27, and "To see my friends in Padua, but of all . . . Hortensio" *Tam. of Shr.* I. 2. 2; in these idioms "of" expresses an adverbial notion of eminence equivalent to MN. E. 'more than,' 'above.' But it seems strange that Macbeth should say that he has avoided any one after his desperate resolution in v. 31; he is evidently plunging into the thick of the fight, not running away, when Macduff calls to him to turn: one would therefore expect him to face Macduff with the words "Of all men least have I avoided thee!" True, he has been told to "beware Macduff," but he would naturally suppose that Macduff had already done the evil the witches warned him against, and would feel that Macduff, of all others, was the man now to be revenged upon. The compunction which comes over him when he stands face to face with the father of the murdered babes seems to be a sudden rush of feeling rather than a settled conviction of guilt—"But get thee backe!"—and can hardly be the reason for any past avoidance of Macduff; yet as the text stands we shall have to consider it as such. ¶ 34 GET THEE

BACKE: Macduff has evidently rushed forward from a group of Malcolm's men. CHARG'D, 'burdened,' cp. V. I. 61. ¶ 35 THINE, 'thy family,' 'thy house,' cp. V. I. 61.

¶ 37 TEARMES, 'names,' 'epithets,' cp. 'stand under the adoption of abominable termes: . . . termes! names! Amaimon sounds well, Lucifer, well" *Merry W.* II. 2. 308. GIVE . . . OUT, 'describe,' N. E. D. 62 a; for the word order, cp. note to III. 6. 48. TO LOOSE LABOUR is an EL. phrase for 'to waste time,' cp. "This is but lost labor, *verba fiunt mortuo*" *Cooper s.v. morior*. ¶ 38 INTRENCH-ANT, 'not to be cut,' cp. note to III. 4. 27; Shakspeare's passive use of the adjective is somewhat anomalous. ¶ 39 IMPRESSE, 'make a mark or incision in,' cp. "Albe the wound were nothing deep imprest" *Spenser's Faerie Queene*, III. xii. 33 (cited in N. E. D.). ¶ 41 MUST in EL. E. expresses a fatal necessity as well as a moral obligation; this shade of meaning is involved in Macduff's "must" in IV. 3. 212.

¶ 42 DISPAIRE, 'cease to trust in,' a meaning common in EL. E., cp. N. E. D. 3. ¶ 43 ANGELL, i.e. Satan. STILL, 'always': an intimation that Macbeth has sold his soul to

## ACT V

## SCENE VII

35-42

### MACDUFFE

I have no words: VIII. 6

My voice is in my sword, thou bloodier  
villaine

Then tearmes can give thee out!

FIGHT: ALARUM

### MACBETH

Thou loosest labour;

As easie may'st thou the intrenchant ayre  
With thy keene sword impresse as make me  
bleed:

Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests;  
I beare a charmed life, which must not yeeld  
To one of woman borne.

VIII. 13

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

ACT V

SCENE VII

42-63

MACDUFFE

Dispaire thy charme; VIII. 13

And let the angell whom thou still hast  
serv'd

Tell thee Macduffe was from his mother's  
womb

Untimely ript.

MACBETH

Accursed be that tongue that tels mee so,  
For it hath cow'd my better part of man!  
And be these jugling fiends no more beleev'd,  
That palter with us in a double sence;  
That keepe the word of promise to our eare,  
And breake it to our hope. I'le not fight  
with thee.

MACDUFFE

Then yeeld thee, coward,  
And live to be the shew and gaze o' th' time:  
Wee'l have thee, as our rarer monsters are,  
Painted upon a pole, and under-writ,  
'Heere may you see the tyrant.'

MACBETH

I will not yeeld

To kisse the ground before young Malcolmes  
feet,  
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.  
Though Byrnane wood be come to Dunsinane,  
And thou oppos'd, being of no woman borne,  
Yet I will try the last. Before my body  
I throw my warlike shield. Lay on, Macduffe,  
And damn'd be him that first cries 'Hold,  
enough!'

VIII. 34

EXEUNT FIGHTING: ALARUMS

ENTER FIGHTING AND MACBETH SLAINE

theevilone. ¶ 45 UNTIMELY  
RIPT and so not "borne" in  
the literal sense of the word.  
¶ 47 MY BETTER PART OF,  
'the stronger part of my,' cp.  
V.2.11. MAN, 'manhood,'  
'manliness,' cp. note to V.2.5.  
¶ 49 To PALTER in EL.E.  
is to "dodge off and on" as  
Comenius glosses it; cp.,  
also, "Whereas they [i.e. the  
devils] could not tell what  
should fall out, they framed  
the oracle in such sort as  
it was doubtfull, and might  
be taken both waies" Gif-  
ford's Dialogue, p. 48. ¶ 51  
I'LE NOT FIGHT WITH  
THEE: the stress necessary  
to make the verse normal  
does not give good sense in  
MN.E. If "I'le" and "fight"  
and "thee" are stressed we  
have a verse like III.6.14.  
Walker would read "I will"  
and join the half verse to the  
next. ¶ 53 GAZE, 'object  
to gaze at'; like "lives" in  
v.31, this use of the word  
has been assumed to be pe-  
culiar to Shakspeare, but in  
N.E.D.s.v. I it is shown that  
'that which is gazed or stared  
at' is the original meaning of  
the noun, and that during the  
sixteenth and seventeenth  
centuries it was in common  
use with this sense. ¶ 55  
PAINTED UPON A POLE,  
i.e. depicted upon a banner  
hung upon a pole as an ad-  
vertisement of the show with-  
in the booth. Such exhibi-  
tions are referred to in Ado  
I.1.267 and in Temp. II.2.28  
ff. "Paint" in EL.E. is used  
of advertising wares for sale,  
cp. "to paint or counterfeit  
and set out things for the  
better sale" Baret's Alvearie.  
¶ 56 The verse has the extra  
syllable before the cæsura.  
¶ 60 OPPOS'D, i.e. my ad-



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

versary, in EL.E. a more or less technical term, cp. "Bear't that th' opposed may beware of thee" Ham. I. 3. 67. BEING, monosyllabic, as usually in EL.E. A participial idiom often occurs in EL.E. where MN.E. prefers the relative clause, cp. "heare answeere of the shippes set foorth [i.e. listen to the report from the ships which set forth]" Sidney's *Arcadia*, p. 9. ¶ 61 TRY THE LAST: the words are usually taken to mean something like 'run the hazard to the end': but they may mean 'test the last of these conditions,' i.e. Macduff's statement. ¶ 62 WARLIKE in MN.E. sounds weak from the prominence which attaches to 'like'; but in EL.E. it was evidently a much stronger word, as Baret's entries show: "warrelike, like a warriour"; "a great fighter, warrelike, contentious"; "valiantlie warrelike." "Warlike shield" here has the meaning 'warrior's shield,' cp. "my warlike word [i.e. the word of a soldier]" I Hen. 6 IV. 3. 31, and "Thy warlike sword" *ibid.* IV. 6. 8. ¶ 63 Cp. "To cry hold is the word of yielding" Carew's *Survey of Cornwall* (cited by Tollet). The rhythm, with its tense monosyllabic impulses, its continuous flow, and its sharp rise at the verse end, " ' x ' || x ' ' ' x ' ' ' x ' , carries out to the very last the notion of strength that Shakspeare has associated with Macbeth. It is interesting to compare the rhythm of these words with that of Hamlet's "the rést is sílence."

The stage direction ENTER [i.e. 're-enter'] FIGHTING AND MACBETH SLAINE is usually omitted by modern editors. But just such action is frequently indicated as a part of battle scenes in EL. drama, e.g. "Here alarum, they are beaten back by the English with great losse" I Hen. 6 I. 2. 21, FO. I, p. 97, and "Alarum. Exeunt. Here alarum againe, and Talbot pursueth the Dolphin and driveth him. Then enter," etc., *ibid.* I. 4. 111, FO. I, p. 100. It is quite likely, therefore, that the FO. represents Shakspeare's conception of Macbeth's end. The long and bitter fight he makes for life when all has turned against him is quite in keeping with the rest of the play. It must be remembered, too, that this part of the scene describes a battle, not a duel—the ALARUMS, 'onsets,' 'rushes,' 'attacks,' cp. N.E.D. II, show that clearly; while the two furious protagonists are the centre of interest, they are not alone, nor when they go out do they leave the stage empty. It is better, therefore, to leave such a usual Elizabethan stage direction stand, and not to try to botch Shakspeare's text to suit modern notions of dramatic art.

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SCENE VIII

The scene direction 'Another part of the field,' which has been prefixed by the Cambridge editors to what has been assumed for the beginning of Scene VII, certainly cannot apply to the verses which follow. For Malcolm enters the castle in V. 7. 29 and it is hardly likely that he comes forth again; the body of young Seyward has been "brought off the field" in v. 10; and Macduff does not make his appearance until v. 20. The action, therefore, must take place inside the castle court and not on the field. Moreover, the long stage direction, with its detailed entrances, its retreat and flourish, and its drums and colours, can hardly be other than a stage direction for the opening of a new and final scene. It is likely, therefore, that the scene division which modern editors insert at v. 30 really belongs here, and that the *Scena Octava* has been accidentally omitted in the FO. text, probably to make the columns finish at the bottom of the page. We had the prelude to the battle in Scene VI, and all of Scene VII up to this point has depicted the struggle itself, with its fights and alarums. What follows is not a part of the battle, but the nobles' acclamation of Malcolm as king, and naturally belongs by itself. The "Scene VIII" which modern editors insert after v. 29 is therefore placed here, where it more naturally belongs.

The real end of the tragedy comes with Macbeth's death. This last scene, like the verses which finish Hamlet, is only a sort of dramatic epilogue, rounding out the action and bringing it to a conclusion.

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

SCENE VIII: THE COURT OF THE CASTLE  
RETREAT AND FLOURISH: ENTER WITH DRUMME AND COLOURS  
MALCOLM SEYWARD ROSSE THANES AND SOLDIERS

I - 16

MALCOLME



WOULD the friends we misse  
were safe arriv'd. VIII. 35

SEYWARD

Some must go off: and yet, by  
these I see,

So great a day as this is cheaply bought.

MALCOLME

Macduffe is missing, and your noble sonne.

ROSSE

Your son, my lord, has paid a souldier's debt:

He onely liv'd but till he was a man;

The which no sooner had his prowesse  
confirm'd

In the unshrinking station where he fought,  
But like a man he dy'de.

SEYWARD

Then he is dead?

ROSSE

I, and brought off the field: your cause of  
sorrow

Must not be measur'd by his worth, for then  
It hath no end.

SEYWARD

Had he his hurts before?

ROSSE

I, on the front.

SEYWARD

Why then, God's soldier be he!

Had I as many sonnes as I have haire,

I would not wish them to a fairer death:

And so his knell is knoll'd. VIII. 50

'confirmed by the fearless manner in which he fought.'

'ground for sorrowing': "cause" has frequently in EL.E. this sense of 'ground,' 'occasion,' 'reason for'; the verbiage is not 'pleonastic,' as it seemed to the editors of Cl.Pr., nor is there any occasion for the emendation 'course' for "cause." ¶12 BEFORE is used

RETREAT, a set of notes as a signal for giving up the pursuit, cp. "Here sound retreat and cease our hot pursuit" I Hen.6 II.2.3. FLOURISH, the usual prelude to a king's entry. ¶1 MISSE seems to have the sense 'long for in absence' as in III.4.90. ¶2 GO OFF as a euphemism for 'die' is 16th- and 17th-century English, see N.E.D.83 d. BY THESE, i.e. to judge from these. ¶6 BUT in the sense of 'only' was in EL.E. often strengthened by "only" itself, N.E.D.6 c. ¶7 PROWESSE is one of the words which, like "coward," lose their intervocalic *w* in EL.E. and become monosyllables, cp. "Nor do I scorne, thou goddess, for to staine My prowes with thee" Greene's Alphonsus, v. 1749, and "Whose prowesse alone hath bene the onely cause" *ibid.* v. 754. ¶8 IN . . FOUGHT seems like a locative qualifier either of DY'DE or of CONFIRM'D. UNSHRINKING is an awkward adjective if STATION means 'position' as in III.I.102; but "station" in EL.E. also means 'bearing'; IN may mean 'by,' and WHERE may be the relatively used adverb. The fact that there is no comma after "confirm'd" in FO.I points to this latter interpretation—

¶10 CAUSE OF SORROW, 'ground for sorrowing': "cause" has frequently in EL.E. this sense of 'ground,' 'occasion,' 'reason for'; the verbiage is not 'pleonastic,' as it seemed to the editors of Cl.Pr., nor is there any occasion for the emendation 'course' for "cause." ¶12 BEFORE is used

# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

both as adverb and preposition in M. E. and e. N. E. for 'in the front part,' cp. "The life of Mahomet is at large described by divers authors, but I find it nowhere so fully as before the Alcaron" Purchas's Pilgrimage V. iii. 243. ¶ 13 GOD'S SOLDIER BE HE! a euphemism for 'let him be God's soldier,' probably a stereotyped phrase, as is "he is made God's saint" in Cooper. ¶ 15 WISH THEM TO A FAIRER DEATH is not 'wish a fairer death for them,' as it is usually translated, but WISH is used in the sense of 'commend,' cp. "I will wish him to her father" Tam. of Shr. I. I. 113.

## ACT V SCENE VIII 16-25

MALCOLME

Hee's worth more sorrow, VIII. 50  
And that I 'le spend for him.

SEYWARD

He's worth no more:  
They say he parted well, and paid his score:  
And so, God be with him! Here comes  
newer comfort.

ENTER MACDUFFE WITH MACBETH'S HEAD

MACDUFFE

Haile, king! for so thou art: behold, where  
stands

Th' usurper's cursed head: the time is free:  
I see thee compast with thy kingdoms pearle,  
That speake my salutation in their minds,  
Whose voyces I desire alowd with mine:  
Haile, King of Scotland!

ALL

Haile, King of Scotland! VIII. 59

FLOURISH

¶ 18 PARTED is here used in its EL. sense of 'departed,' a euphemism still current in the phrase 'the dear departed'; cp. also "a' parted . . at the turning o' th' tyde" Hen. 5 II. 3. 12. WELL, 'nobly.' SCORE, 'reckoning,' 'scot': the association between settling one's account at an inn and death occurs frequently in English speech; a kindred figure is that embodied in the Western phrase, 'to pass in one's checks.' Young Seyward's euthanasia and his father's stoical reception of the news are told in Holinshed. ¶ 21 TIME, 'the world,' cp. note to I. 5. 64. ¶ 22 THY KINGDOMES PEARLE, 'flower of the nobility,' EL. E. "pearle" being a collective plural form; cp. "Decking with liquid pearle the bladed grasse" Mids. I. I. 211, and "pearle and gold" Tam. of Shr. V. I. 77, so Rich. 3 IV. 4. 322; there is thus no occasion for emending the word to 'peares' (which, by the way, does not spell 'peers' in EL. E.), nor to 'pearls,' nor to 'pale.' But it may be that Macduff is thinking of the word in its heraldic sense, cp. "pearl, in heraldry; the silver or white colour in the coats of barons and other noblemen" Kersey. ¶ 24 WHOSE is the EL. connective relative corresponding to MN. E. 'but their.' VOYCE in EL. E. is the regular word for 'assent,' and frequently means 'vote,' 'suffrage'; cp. "I meane your voice for crowning of the king" Rich. 3 III. 4. 29.

¶ 26 EXPENCE in the sense of 'expenditure' is now obsolete, N. E. D. I b, but was common in the 16th and 17th centuries, so that emendations like 'expanse,' 'excess,' etc., are idle. SPEND . . EXPENCE: cp. note to V. 3. 44. ¶ 27 RECKON WITH, 'render account for.' LOVES, the usual EL. abstract plural. ¶ 29 EARLES: the historical note about the appointment of the earls is from Holinshed: "These were the first earles that have beene heard of amongst the Scottishmen" ed. Boswell-Stone, p. 45. ¶ 30 MORE, 'further,'



# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

cp. note to III. 4. 137. TO DO: cp. note to V. 7. 28. ¶ 31 WOULD: cp. notes to I. 7. 34 and V. 2. 4. PLANTED in EL. E. means 'established,' cp. "in one . . . howre To plant and orewhelme custome" Wint. T. IV. 1. 8, and I. 4. 28 of this play. NEWLY, 'anew,' cp. "I will have that subject newly writ ore" L. L. L. 1. 2. 120, and "newly, . . . in a new sort or maner: contrare to the old fashion, *nove*" Baret's Alvearie. WITH, 'in accordance with,' ¶ 32 AS in EL. E. and still in colloquial MN. E. means 'to wit.' ¶ 34 PRODUCING FORTH, 'bringing forth into the light,' a meaning still current in 'produce the prisoner.' MINISTERS, 'agents.' ¶ 36 SELFE is used as an adjective, cp. the note to III. 4. 142. ¶ 37 OFF in this idiom has its EL. sense of 'away,' cp. "it takes one off from business" Phr. Gen., and "your command is taken off" Oth. V. 2. 331. The idiom is similar to that of III. 1. 105 and the notion parallels that of I. 7. 20. WHAT NEED-FULL ELSE, 'what is needful besides,' a usage common in e. N. E., cp. "At what time Sylla was made lord of all he would have had Cæsar put away his wife Cornelia" North's Plutarch, p. 758. ¶ 38 CALLS UPON US, 'demands our attention,' cp. note to III. 1. 37. THE GRACE OF GRACE, 'the favour of divine guidance': such plays on word meanings are common in Shakspeare's time, as Theobald pointed out: "Doe

## ACT V SCENE VIII 26-41

MALCOLME [VIII. 60]

We shall not spend a large expence of time  
Before we reckon with your severall loves,  
And make us even with you. My thanes and  
kinsmen,  
Henceforth be earles, the first that ever  
Scotland

In such an honor nam'd. What 's more to do,  
Which would be planted newly with the time,  
As calling home our exil'd friends abroad  
That fled the snares of watchfull tyranny;  
Producing forth the cruell ministers  
Of this dead butcher and his fiend-like  
queene,

Who, as 't is thought, by selfe and violent  
hands

Tooke off her life; this, and what needfull  
else

That calls upon us, by the grace of grace,  
We will performe in measure, time and place:  
So, thanks to all at once and to each one,  
Whom we invite to see us crown'd at Scone.

FLOURISH [VIII. 75]  
EXEUNT OMNES

curse the grace that with such grace hath blest them" Two. Gent. III. 1. 146; "The greatest grace lending grace" All's W. II. 1. 163; "spight of spight" 3 Hen. 6 II. 3. 5; "for the love of love" Ant. & Cl. I. 1. 44. ¶ 40 ONE and SCONE rhyme in EL. E., see note to IV. 1. 7. ¶ 41 According to Holinshed, ed. Boswell-Stone, p. 44, Malcolm "was crowned at Scone the 25th day of Aprill in the yeere of our Lord 1057."

Act V is, as it were, a grand finale to this Faust symphony, and the æsthetic analogy is more than mere accident. For Macbeth is a group of themes wrought together into an æsthetic unity, and this closing act reviews them all, like the closing movement of a great musical symphony. The play opened with a brief introductory motive of supernatural in-

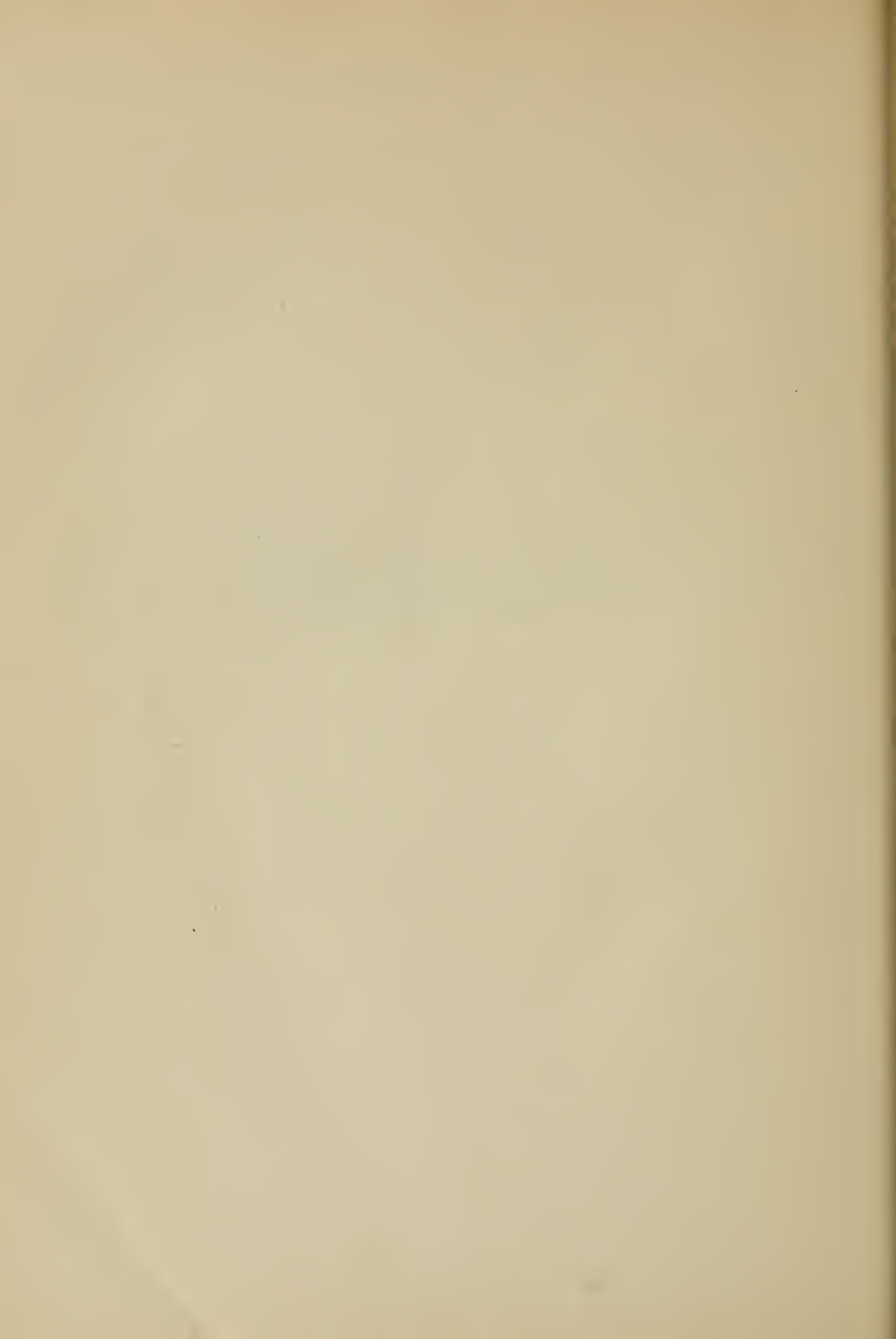
# THE TRAGEDIE OF MACBETH

terests, which reappears from time to time during its course. Act I was what might be called the soldier theme, Macbeth triumphant; Act II had for its theme Lady Macbeth and the murder of Duncan; Act III gave us the Banquo theme with the Duncan and Lady Macbeth interests woven into it, all three uniting in the punishment of Macbeth, the internal Nemesis of the tragedy; Act IV presents the Macduff-Malcolm theme. Act V begins in Scene I with the Lady Macbeth theme—recalling, too, the Duncan and Banquo themes that have preceded; Scene II develops the Macduff-Malcolm theme; Scene III recurs to the soldier theme—Macbeth in action; Scene IV carries further the Macduff-Malcolm theme; Scene V returns to the horrors of Act III, weaves in the Lady Macbeth interest, and suggests again the Macbeth in action of Act I more sharply and strongly; Scenes VI and VII bring them all into a swirling finale, with the soldier theme struck hard and tense in "Lay on, Macduffe, and damn'd be him that first cries 'Hold, enough!'" while Scene VIII adds the finishing cadence to the whole, the strong C major of Macduff's "the time is free" and Scotland herself again.

There is no play of Shakspeare that has such a marvellous æsthetic unity as this of the fury-driven Macbeth. There is an incompleteness about Hamlet, the long wailing minor of "the rest is silence." There is no redemption for his failure: one closes the book, saddened by a yearning pathos and wondering if, after all, there is another life for the lessons this life should learn. But it is not so with Macbeth. His is, as it were, a triumphant failure: tricked and cheated by the powers of evil, he would be on his guard against them if he were given another chance. In the last action he is himself again and dies bravely fighting. He has sold his soul, but with his mighty human strength he wins back his manliness. And damned though he be,—damned with the deep desert of sin,—he pays the price like a man.

INDEX TO THE NOTES  
ON MACBETH





# INDEX TO THE NOTES ON MACBETH

The first number refers to the page, the second to the note; where but one reference is given it is the page number that is indicated.

- a*, sound of, in EL. E., 134.2, 148.30; before *l* and consonant, 86.12  
*Abound*, moral connotation of, 176.95  
*About*, by a circuitous way, 113.11  
*Absolute*, positive, 142.40; downright, 172.38  
Abstract nouns: plural of *jealousies*, 171.29; *loves*, 101.122, 226.27; *revenges*, 198.3; *seeds*, 96.70  
Abstract words concrete in EL. E., 221.31  
*Abuse*, deceive, 60.50  
*Accompt*, account, 193.42  
*Accus'd*, revealed in true character, 177.107  
*Accustom'd*, customary, 192.31  
*Acheron*, Acherusia, 135.15  
*Act*, action, activity, 85.5; execute, 131.140, 176.97  
*Act in safetie*, mature plans in security, 94.54  
*Actuall performances*, active functions, mechanical acts, 191.13  
*Addition*, title, 23.106; mark of distinction, 99.100  
*Address to sleepe*, 66.25  
*Adhere*, suit, agree, be fitting, 50.52  
Adjectives in *-ed* corresponding to MN. E. participles, 75.63; to adjectives in *-able*, 53.73; absolute use of superlative of, 76.72  
*Admir'd*, amazing, astonishing, 127.110  
*Advantage*, opportunity, chance, 210.11  
Adverbs without suffix, 41.72, 47.17, 84.143; from adjectives ending in *-ly*, 68.46, 188.235; position of, 31.20, 172.46  
*Advise . . to*, recommend course of action, 143.44  
*Afear'd*, frightened, 22.96, 49.39  
*Affear'd* (used of a title), confirmed, 172.34  
*Affection*, disposition, 175.77  
*Agitation*, activity, 191.12  
*ai*, unstressed in words of French origin, 4.4  
*Alarum*, onset, 198.4, 5; din of battle, 218.10  
*Alexandrine*. See *Versification*, *six-wave series*  
*All*, any, 105.11, 196.84; everything, 78.99, 162.12; as a whole, 203.1  
*All-haile*, to salute, to greet, 35.7  
*All thing*, quite, altogether, 91.13  
*All to all*, 124.92  
*Almost at oddes*, on the point of quarrelling, 129.127  
*Almost it selfe*, of its own accord, 221.27  
*Always thought*, 103.132  
*Amaz'd*, dazed, bewildered, 79.114, 196.86  
*Amazedly*, in consternation, 158.126  
*Amend*, recover, 180.145  
*A misse*, at a loss, 79.102  
*Am to*, am going to, 219.4; have to, must, 60.43  
*Anacolutha*, punctuation of, 48.28  
*And*, if, 140.19; post-positive, 163.22  
*Angell*, applied to Satan, 222.43  
*Angerly*, 134.1  
*Annoyance*, injury, 196.84  
*Anon*, coming, 72.24; in a moment, 116.11  
*Anoynted*, consecrated, 76.73  
*Anticipate*, prevent, forestall, 159.144  
*Antidote*, 207.43  
*Antique*, a dance, 158.130  
*ἀπὸ κοινοῦ*. See *Zeugmatic constructions*  
Apostrophes in Folio: *ha's*, 20.79  
*Appall*, make pale, 121.60  
*Appeare*, become visible, 217.47  
*Apply*, attend assiduously, 108.30  
*Approve*, prove, show, 42.4  
*Arbitrate*, decide, determine, 211.20  
*Are*, with verbs of motion, 20.80; rhymes with *care*, 154.91  
*Arm'd*, protected by armor, 126.101, 152.68  
*Aroynt*, begone, 14.6  
*Art*, professional skill, 179.143  
Article, definite, corresponding to a MN. E. possessive pronoun, 6.6, 26.137, 35.13, 51.58, 60.48, 112.4, 127.109, 141.25, 172.34, 39; demonstrative force of, 102.130; enclitic, 14.7; loss of vowel of, 4.5; marking formality, 115.2; omitted before the superlative, 31.17, 114.21  
Article, indefinite, before abstract nouns, 53.68

# INDEX TO THE NOTES ON MACBETH

- Article, instrumental case of, 92.26  
*Artificiall*, cunning, 136.27  
*As*, as being, because it is, 43.12, 47.13; as if, 31.11, 66.28, 213.13; in proportion as, 90.7; such as, 176.92; to wit, 227.32; when, 53.78; as *who should say*, 143.42; as *you are*, that you are, 134.2  
*Ask'd for*, inquired about, missed, 49.30  
*Assay*, effort, attempt, 179.143  
*Assisted*, supported, 12.52  
 Astrology, 86.8  
*At*, 'apud,' in the presence of, 115.1  
*At first and last*, once for all, 115.1  
*At more time*, with better opportunity, 29.153  
*At once*, without more ado, 128.118  
*At quiet*, 72.21  
*Attempt*, attack, 64.11, 142.39  
*Attend*, await, 104.3; wait for, expect, 211.15  
*Augure hole*, 82.128  
*Augures*, divination, 129.124  
*Authoriz'd*, vouched for as true, 121.66  
 Auxiliary verbs. See under separate entries  
*Avouch*, warrant, stand sponsor for, 101.120  
*Aweary of the sun*, 217.49  
*Ayme*, mark, 84.149  
*Ayre*, climate, 42.1  
*Ayre-drawne*, pictured in air, 121.62  
*Baby*, doll, 127.106  
*Bad*, EL. adverb, 111.55  
*Balles*, orbs, emblem of sovereignty, 157.121  
*Banke and schoole*, 46.6  
*Barefaced*, open, avowed, 101.119  
*Battell*, division of troops, 218.4  
*Batter'd at*, laid siege to, 183.178  
*Be*, 3d pers. plu. indic., 165.48  
*Bear-baiting*, 126.100, 219.2  
*Beare*, exalt, maintain, 136.30  
*Beares*, possesses, 23.110  
*Beast*, not man, connoting stupidity and cowardice as well as vulgarity, 50.47  
*Beest*, monosyllabic, 219.15  
*Before*, in the front part of, 226.12  
*Behold*, transitive uses of, 204.20  
*Being*, monosyllabic, 223.60  
*Beldams*, hags, 134.2  
*Bell-man*, 63.3  
*Beside us*, so as to miss us, 221.29  
*Bestowe*, lodge, 92.30, 140.24  
*Bestride*, defend, 169.4  
 Bible, reference to, 76.74, 83.136, 177.111  
*Bid*, ask, 43.13, 59.31  
*Bidding*, command, 130.129  
*Bill*, catalogue, 99.100  
*Birnam Wood*, 154.93  
*Birthdome*, land of our birth, 169.4  
*Black*, sinister, 111.53, 149.43, 150.48  
*Bladed*, in the green ear, 150.55  
*Blames*, charges, accusations, 178.124  
*Blaspheme*, slander, speak evil of, 148.26, 177.108  
*Blessings*, evidences of divine favour, 181.158  
*Blind-worms*, 147.16  
*Blood-bolter'd*, 157.123  
*Bloody*, murderous, blood-guilty, 92.30, 101.116, 173.57  
*Blow*, blow upon, 15.14; proclaim, 48.24  
*Boadments*, predictions, 154.96  
*Bond*, deed, 110.49; pledge, 153.84  
*Borne*, managed, 138.3  
*Borne in hand*, charged or deceived, 98.81  
*Bosome*, intimate, 13.64  
*Bosomes*, hearts, 168.2  
*Botches*, patches, 103.134  
*Both*, either of two, 72.13  
*Both the worlds*, 106.16  
*Bought*, obtained, 49.32  
*Bound in to*, confined with, 117.24  
*Bounty*, generosity, 176.93  
*'Bove*, superior to, 136.30  
*Braine-sickly*, insanelly, 68.46  
*Breake*, disclose, 50.48  
*Breath*, flattery, 205.27; life, spirit, 155.99; respite, 62.61; *give them breath*, make them speak, 218.9  
*Breech'd with gore*, 80.122  
*Breed*, breeding, 177.108  
*Briefely*, without delay, 83.139  
*Brinded*, brindled, 145.1  
*Broad*, free, 117.23  
*Broad words*, frank speech, 140.21  
*Broke*, broken up, 127.109  
*Brought forth*, discovered, brought to light, 129.125  
*Brows*, face, appearance, 170.23  
*Bruited*, announced, proclaimed, 220.22  
*Buckle in*, limit, enclose, 200.15  
*Businesse*, care, attention, 44.16; commotion, tumult, 77.86, 135.22; task or purpose, 60.48; topic or matter, 58.23  
*But*, only, 46.4, 46.6, 52.60; strengthened by *only*, 225.6; than, 9.29; unless, without being, 93.48, 49; until, 163.23  
*Byrnan*, 155.98  
*By the way*, incidentally, 131.130  
*By your leave*, permit me, 45.31  
*Cabin*, prison cell, 117.24



# INDEX TO THE NOTES ON MACBETH

- Call upon*, make demand upon, 103.140, 227.38  
*Capitaine*, trisyllabic, 10.33  
*Care*, loving regard, 34.57  
*Carelesse*, uncared for, 31.11  
*Carry*, to take to a place, 68.49  
*Cases*, confusion of, 102.123, 116.14, 120.42  
*Cast*, to throw in wrestling, 73.47; to diagnose, 208.51  
*Catalogue*, muster-roll, 99.92  
*Catch*, take, 36.19  
*Cause*, because, 140.21; business, 92.34; matter of dispute, interest, 131.136; disease, 198.4, 5, 200.15  
*Cause of*, ground for, 225.10  
*Caution*, precaution, 143.44  
*Celebrate*, perform with ritual, 60.51  
*Cenny*, senna, 208.55  
*Censure*, judgement, 211.14  
*Certaine*, infallible, 87.14; *for certaine*, I am sure, 200.14  
*Cesterne*, a pool, 174.63  
*Chair*, throne, 204.21  
*Challenge*, find fault with, 120.42  
*Chambers*, private rooms or residence of a king, 209.2  
*Chance*, misfortune, calamity, 78.96  
*Charge*, commission, 170.20  
*Charg'd*, burdened, 195.61, 222.34  
*Chastise*, to put down rebellion, 37.28  
*Chawdron*, entrails, 148.33  
*Cheere*, toast of welcome, 119.33. See *Chair*  
*Chiastic construction*, 76.69  
*Chiefest*, greatest, best, most important, 136.33  
*Children*, three syllables, 183.177  
*Choake*, obstruct, 6.9  
*Choppie*, fissured with wrinkles, 18.44  
*Chops*, jaws, 8.22  
*Chuck*, epithet of endearment, 110.45  
*Clatter*, noise of voices, 220.21  
*Clearenesse*, freedom from blame, 103.133  
*Cleere*, faultless, 47.18; frankly, 41.72  
*Cling*, shrivel up, 216.39  
*Clipt*, called, 99.94  
*Clogge*, hamper, embarrassment, 143.43  
*Close*, secret, 135.7  
*Close*, to come together, 105.14  
*Clos'd*, enclosed, 99.99  
*Closset*, writing-desk or cabinet, 190.6  
*Clowdy*, sullen, 143.41  
*Cloyster'd*, cloister-haunting, 109.41  
*Cold*, dispiriting, 62.61  
*Colmekill*, Iona, 88.33  
*Combin'd*, in league with, 23.111  
*Combustion*, political confusion, tumult, 75.63  
*Come in time*, 72.8  
*Come on*, 107.26  
*Coming on of time*, 35.9  
*Comfort*, aid, support, 9.27  
*Commend*, offer, present, 47.11; commit, 93.39  
*Common*, public, 102.125  
*Composition*, terms of surrender, 13.59  
*Compt*, account, 44.26  
*Compunctious*, 39.46  
*Confident*, overbold, 210.8  
*Confinesse*, limitless, 173.55  
*Confound*, ruin, bring to naught, 150.54, 176.99  
*Confusion*, ruin, 76.71, 136.29  
*Conjure*, adjure, 150.50  
*Connective relative*, 37.37, 101.122, 138.2  
*Consent*, 58.25  
*Consequence*, sequel, 24.126, 46.3, 203.5  
*Considered of*, thought carefully over, 97.76  
*Construction*, interpretation, 31.12  
*Construction according to sense*, 173.54  
*Contented*, agreed, 83.140  
*Continent*, restraining, 174.64  
*Continued*, continuous, 218.10  
*Contractions*. See *Stress*, lack of  
*Convert to*, change its nature and become, 187.229  
*Convey*, carry on (with notion of secrecy), 174.71  
*Convince*, overpower, 52.64, 179.142  
*Cool*, to chill, 212.10  
*Coppie*, holding by copy, 108.38  
*Corner of the moone*, horn of the moon, 135.23  
*Corporall*, material, 21.81  
*Corporall agents*, 53.80  
*Cosin*, kinsman, 209.1  
*To be counsail'd*, to take advice, 59.29  
*Countenance*, 77.85  
*Counterfeit*, portrait, 77.81  
*Couplet at close of scene*, 13.64  
*Course*, technical term in bear-baiting, 219.2  
*Courst*, chased, pursued, 44.21  
*Court*, immediate surroundings of the king, 104.1; *i' th' court*, at the palace, 113.11  
*Cracke*, loud noise, blare of trumpet, 157.117  
*Cracks*, shots, 10.37  
*Craving*, demanding, 92.34  
*Craw*, caw, 214.19  
*Crew*, company of people, 179.141  
*Crib*, hovel, 117.24  
*Crost*, thwarted, opposed, 98.81  
*Crow*, rook, 111.51  
*Cruell*, wild, fierce, savage, 78.93  
*Cry*, report, rumour, 212.2;

# INDEX TO THE NOTES ON MACBETH

- scream, clamour, outcry, 212.6
- Cure*, assuage, 186.215;  
treat medicinally, 207.39
- Curres*, watch-dogs and  
sheep-dogs, 99.93
- Of custome*, habitual, 126.97
- Damme*, mother, 187.218
- Damn*, to doom, 7.14
- Damned*, damning or dam-  
nable, 139.10, 193.38
- Dare*, subjunctive, 126.99,  
171.33
- Date of Macbeth, 71.6, 72.  
12, 94.56, 180.146
- Dative, ethical, 55.5, 118.32,  
143.41, 203.5
- Davenant, 34, 103.140, 137,  
149.43
- Day*, battle, 221.27
- Deadly*, death-dealing,  
186.215
- Deádmán*, 182.170
- Deaftly*, *ea* shortened in MN.  
E., 152.68
- Death*, bloodshed, murder,  
75.61; in imprecations,  
204.16
- Deed*, action, 67.33, 132.  
143; execution (of pur-  
pose), 159.146; thing to  
be done, 70.73
- Deepe*, weighty, important,  
24.126, 44.17; wide ap-  
plication of, in EL.E., 30.7
- Deere*, used of what stands  
in intimate relation to a  
person's interest or affec-  
tion, 198.3
- Defect*, faultiness, 57.18
- Defiance*, Romantic forms  
of, 126.104
- Degrees*, rank, order of pre-  
cedence, 115.1
- Delicate*, pleasant, delight-  
ful, 43.10
- Delinquent*, criminal, 139.12
- Deliver*, tell, 35.12; de-  
scribe, 112.2
- Demology, academic,  
132, 151.63; Bacon's re-  
lation to, 54; charms, 66.29,  
146.5, 6, 147.15, 22, 148.  
30, 152.66; devils hover in  
the air, 4.11; devil, names  
of, 72.11; work in storms,  
75.59; hedge-pig, 145.2;  
magic mirror, 157.119;  
number three, 16.33, 145.2;  
popular, 111.56; spirits of  
evil, 39.50; witches: their  
dame, 134.2; their dances,  
158.130; familiars of  
witches, 4.8; fly in the air,  
136.33; habits of, 14.1,  
15.8, 16.23, 18.46, 136.33;  
their 'little Martins,' 136.  
34; names of these spirits,  
145.3; powers of, 14.2,  
15.11, 16.24, 24.123, 150.46
- Demy-wolves*, 99.93
- Denies his person*, refuses  
his presence, 130.128
- Deny*, refuse, 206.28
- Destroy*, used of persons,  
104.6
- Devil*, monosyllabic in EL.  
E., 23.107, 173.56
- Devotion*, earnest applica-  
tion, 176.94
- Dignity*, worth, value, 195.63
- Directly*, without more ado,  
196.78
- Disaster*, bad luck, 100.112
- Discharge*, unburden, 196.81
- Discomfort*, undoing, 9.28,  
164.29
- Discovery*, reconnaissance,  
209.6
- Disjoynt*, fall to pieces,  
106.16
- Dismall*, disastrous, 12.53,  
135.21, 213.12
- Dispaire*, cease to trust in,  
222.42
- Dispatch*, management,  
41.69
- Displac'd*, banished, 127.109
- Disposition*, character,  
128.113
- Dispute*, oppose, strive  
against, 187.220
- Dis-seate*, unseat, 204.21
- Distance*, discord, enmity,  
101.116
- Distemper'd*, a medical  
term, 200.15
- Distinguish*, single out, 99.96
- Distracted*, mad, crazed,  
insane, 79.110
- Divell*, EL. form of *devil*,  
173.56
- Division*, a musical term,  
176.96
- Do*, behave, 221.26; work  
mischief, 15.10
- Do better*, look better, 222.32
- Do bravely*, act in a highly  
creditable way, 221.26
- Doffe* (do off), put away,  
184.188
- Dollar, 13.62
- dom, 169.4
- Domestique*, at home, 107.25
- Done*, over, 3.3, 46.1
- Double*, doubly, 153.83
- Double meaning implied:  
*cast*, 73.47; *chambers*, 209.  
2; *come down*, 114.16;  
*consent*, 58.25; *cries*, 36.  
22; *dress*, 49.36; *duties*,  
31.24; *encounter*, 116.9;  
*foule*, 17.38; *frailties*, 83.  
132; *free*, 29.155; *grace*,  
227.38; *guilt*, 69.57; *honor*,  
58.26; *lye*, 73.44; *morrow*,  
41.63; *open*, 173.52; *owe*,  
31.22; *quenched*, 63.2;  
*safe*, 32.25; *step*, 33.48;  
*time*, 41.64, 65; *unnatu-  
ral*, 86.10; *vault*, 78.101;  
*well*, 88.37
- Double negative, 20.74, 32.30
- Double question, 185.195
- Doubt*, fear, 166.67, 217.43;  
ground of distrust, 171.25
- Doubtfull*, apprehensive,  
104.7
- Downfall*, down-fallen, 169.4
- Drenched*, drowned, 53.68
- Dress*, to address one's  
self to, 49.36
- Drops*, tears, 32.35
- Dudgeon*, haft of dagger,  
60.46
- Dull*, lose will power, 216.42
- Duncan, his relationship to  
Macbeth, 8.24

# INDEX TO THE NOTES ON MACBETH

- Dunnest*, murkiest, 40.52  
*Dunsinane*, 154.93  
*Dusty*, worthless, empty, 214.23
- ea* represents a long, close e in EL. E., 4.6, 34.49, 88.37, 119.36, 136.31, 152.64, 186.209, 204.10  
*Each*, every, 202.29; *each way*, in every direction, 163.22  
*Earnest*, pledge, 26.132  
*Easie*, easily, 84.143  
*Eate*, form of past tense: feed upon, gnaw at, 87.18  
*Eat on*, eat of, 21.84  
*-ed*, full of, 148.24; characterized by, 53.73; equivalent to particip. adj. in *-ing*, 43.5; with causative force, 127.110  
*Effect*, accomplishment, 39.48  
*Effects of*, actions associated with, 191.11  
*Egge*, term of opprobrium, 167.83  
*Eight*, e.N. E. form of *eighth*, 157.119  
*Either*, a monosyllable, 219.18  
*Elision*, 24.119, 45.30, 152.71  
*Emendations*: *accust*, 177.107; *advantage to be given*, 210.11; *and wisdom*, 169.15; *at first and last*, 115.1; *beast*, 50.50; *cause*, 200.15, 225.10; *cheere and dis-eate*, 204.21; *cold stone*, 146.6; *consent*, 58.25; *death*, 67.38; *discerne*, 169.15; *expence*, 226.26; *forc'd*, 212.5; *gentle*, 123.76; *greene one red*, 69.63; *haire*, 156.113; *inhabit then*, 127.105; *I say*, 216.31; *lookes*, 107.27; *maine*, 210.10; *makes* . . . *wood*, 110.49; *move*, 163.22; *one*, 131.131; *our*, 155.98; *peace*, 106.20; *pearle*, 226.22; *pull in*, 216.42; *rookie*, 111.51; *sanctity*, 179.144; *shagge-eared*, 167.83; *shut up*, 56.16; *sleep* . . . *celebrates*, 60.51; *sowre*, 62.56; *stuffe*, 207.44; *summer-seeming*, 175.86; *taint*, 203.3; *the*, 50.50; *time*, 188.235; *times has*, 123.78; *unsafe the while*, 108.32; *upore*, 176.99; *vaulting ambition, etc.*, 48.28; *way of life*, 205.22; *who cannot want*, 139.8  
*Eminence*, deference, 108.31  
*Enow*, plu. of *enough*, 72.8, 165.57  
*Enterance*, three syllables, 38.40  
*Entreat*, get, induce (or) pass the time, 57.22  
*Envernes*, 17th-cent. form of *Inverness*, 33.42  
*Epicure*, sensualist, 203.8  
*Equivocation*, doctrine of, 72.12, 217.43  
*Ermites*, hermits, beadsmen, 44.20  
*Establish estate*, fix succession, 32.37  
*Eternal*, immortal, 96.68  
*Eterne*, eternal, 108.38  
*Euripides*, referred to, 111.52  
*Even like*, M. E. *even lik*: 'just like,' 86.11  
*Evenso*, is it possible, 195.73  
*Ever*, forever, 204.21  
*Evill*, disease, malady, 180.146  
*Evils*, ills, 173.57; sins, vices, 177.112  
*Exasperate*, a past participle, 141.38  
*Except*, unless, 10.39  
*Execution*, wielding, 8.18  
*Expectation*, prospect, promise, 71.7; of *expectation*, of those expected, 113.10  
*Expedition*, haste, swiftness, 79.116  
*Expense*, expenditure, 226.26  
*Expire*, 182.172  
*Exploit*, act, 159.144
- Extasie*, madness, 106.22, 182.170  
*Extend*, aggravate, 121.57  
*Eye*, presence, 184.186  
*Eyld*, reward, 43.13
- Fact*, crime, 139.10  
*Faculties*, authority, 47.17  
*Faile*, miss, 92.28; deny, refuse, withhold from, 140.21  
*Faire*, contrasted with *foule*, 4.10  
*Faith*, fealty, 201.18  
*Falconry*, 110.46  
*Fall*, cause of ruin, 174.69  
*False*, treacherous, 84.143  
*Fantasticall*, imaginary, 19.53, 27.139  
*Farrow*, litters, 152.65  
*Fast*, sound, 191.9  
*Fatall*, death-boding, prophetic, 59.36, 63.3  
*Fate*, death, ruin, 82.127, 96.72, 103.137, 153.84  
*Father*, a term of respect, 85.4  
*Favor*, face, countenance, 42.73  
*Feare*, to give cause for alarm, 42.73; to fear for, 36.17; to fear is true, 162.20  
*Fears*, objects of fear, 26.137  
*Fed*, fatted, 14.6  
*Feede*, eat, 119.35  
*Fee-griefe*, 185.196  
*Fell*, savage, murderous, 166.71; covering of hair, 213.11  
*Fenny*, fen-inhabiting, 146.12  
*Fevorous*, characterized by shaking, 76.66  
*Fie*, interjection of indignant reproach, 193.40  
*Fiend*, monster, 188.233  
*Fife*, 88.36  
*Fight*, fighting, 22.91  
*Figures of speech*, homely, etc., 40.54  
*File*, to defile, 95.65; list, 199.8



# INDEX TO THE NOTES ON MACBETH

- Fillet*, lobe of lung or liver, 146.12  
*Fill up*, satisfy, 175.88  
*Filthie*, murky, 4.11  
*Fire*, dissyllabic, 146.11  
*Firme*, close in texture, 149.38  
*Firstlings*, the first of their kind, 159.147  
*Fitfull fever*, 107.23  
*Flawes*, outbursts or accessions of passion, 121.63  
*Flighty*, fleet, swift, 159.145  
*Floate*, move to and fro, 163.21  
*Florid style*, 78.96  
*Flowt*, insult, 11.49  
*Fly*, any winged insect, 164.32  
*Folk-lore*. See Demonology  
*Fool*, laughing-stock, 60.44  
*For*, as for, 162.15; notwithstanding, 172.44; on account of, because of, 101.121, 187.225  
*Forbid*, banned (*homo interdixtus*), 16.21  
*Forc'd*, reinforced, 212.5  
*Forge*, invent, 175.82  
*Forke*, serpent's tongue, 147.16  
*Forman's Diary*, 122  
*Former*, immediately preceding, 157.115  
*Forraine*, abroad, 107.25  
*Forres*, 17.39  
*Forth*, abroad, 179.140  
*Fortune*, misfortunes, perils, 97.78  
*Foysons*, resources, 175.88  
*Frailties*, unprotected weakness, 83.132  
*Frame of things*, the universe, 106.16  
*Franchis'd*, made free, 58.28  
*Free*, faultlessly, 57.19; to banish, 141.35  
*Free hearts*, unrestrained thoughts, 29.155  
*Free honors*, guiltless honours, 141.36  
*From him*, by his authority, 23.105  
*Fry*, offspring, 168.84  
*Fumes*, medical meaning of, 52.66  
*Function*, activity of intellectual powers, 27.140  
*Gall*, poison, venom, 39.49  
*Gaze*, object to gaze at, 223.53  
*Gender*, change of, 172.41; *snake*, fem., 105.14  
*Generall*, unrestricted, unlimited, 117.23; common, public, 13.62  
*Genitive*, objective, 22.93, 202.28; prepositional form of, equivalent to possessive pronoun, 186.207; without -s, 30.6, 45.27  
*Genius*, daimon, 94.56  
*Gentle*, courteous, 181.161; tame, subdued, 42.3, 123.76; *gentle my lord*, 107.27; *gentle weale*, 123.76  
*Gently*, tamely, 220.24  
*Gentry*, nobility, 199.9  
*Germaine*, a collective plural, 151.59  
*Gerund construction*, 218.5, 221.28  
*Give me*, omission of object, 14.5  
*Give me your favour*, 28.149  
*Given*, forced to accept, 210.12  
*Give out*, report, 184.192; describe, 222.37  
*Gives way to*, gives rein to, 56.9  
*Give . . to*, declare to be, 24.119  
*Glasse*, magic mirror, 157.119  
*Go*, start, 159.146  
*Go off*, euphemism for die, 225.2  
*Go too*, strong expression of disapproval, 194.52  
*God be with you*, good-bye, 93.44  
*God bless us*, a charm against devils, 66.29  
*God eyld us*, God bless us, 43.13  
*God's soldier be he*, 226.13  
*Golden*, red, 80.118  
*Good*, advantage, 87.24, 131.135; brave, 6.4, 168.3, 182.171, 197.2; tending to well-being, 26.134  
*Good morrow*, 74.49  
*Goodnesse*, right and justice, 171.33; success, 179.136  
*Goose*, associated with cowardice, 204.12  
*Gorgon*, 77.77  
*Gospell'd*, 98.88  
*Gouts*, drops, 60.46  
*Grace*, good fortune, 19.55; favour, 136.31  
*Grace of grace*, 227.38  
*Grac'd*, accomplished, 120.41  
*Graces*, good qualities, 176.90  
*Grafted*, moral meaning of, 173.51  
*Grave*, carefully considered, authoritative, 91.22  
*Great*, noble, pertaining to persons of high rank or office, 130.129; mighty, powerful, 179.143  
*Greeze*, any fat-like substance, 152.65  
*Greene*, sickly, 49.37  
*Greene one red*, 69.63  
*Grim alarm*, 198.4, 5  
*Grow*, become fixed, 32.32  
*Growing*, fruitage, 32.29  
*Guild*, to make red, 68.56  
*Had the speed of*, 37.36  
*Hah*, exclamation of surprise, 69.59  
*Halfe-world*, hemisphere, 60.49  
*Hangman*, executioner, 66.28  
*Happinesse*, good fortune, 13.58  
*Happy*, felicitously written, 25.128; fortunate, 19.62  
*Harnes*, injuries, 173.55  
*Harnesse*, armour, 218.52  
*Harp'd*, guessed, 153.74  
*Harrold*, herald, 23.102  
*Haunt*, resort habitually, 43.9

# INDEX TO THE NOTES ON MACBETH

- Have in compt*, to hold on account, 44.26
- Having*, property, estate, 19.56
- Hawking terms*, 86.12
- Hawkt at*, 'attacked,' pounced upon, 87.13
- Head*, fountainhead, 79.103; summit of eminence, capstone, 151.58; body of people gathered together, 154.97; in head, in mind, 131.139
- Heare*, listen to, 62.57, 66.24
- Heart alive*, 139.15
- Heavens*, collective noun, 85.5; stage canopy, 85.5
- Heavie*, overpowering, 56.6
- Heccat*, 60.52, 109.41, 134.1
- Heere*, as adjective, 178.133, 180.148
- Heereafter*, 213.17
- Hell gate*, the gates of hell, 71.2
- Hell-hound*, 222.32
- Hell is murky*, 193.39
- Helpe*, allies, 184.186
- Hemlocke*, 148.25
- Hendiadys*: banke and schoole, 46.6
- Herbenger*, purveyor, 33.45, 218.10
- Hid*, shielded, protected, 83.132
- High*, earnest, 36.21
- Highly*, earnestly, intensely, 36.21, 45.29
- High or low*, great or lesser, 152.67
- Himselfe*, used as subject, 162.8, 181.150
- Hircan*, Hyrcanian, 126.101
- His*, his descendants, 158.124; possessive case of it, 13.56, 46.4, 76.71, 107.24; objective genitive, 34.55
- Hisse*, 183.175
- Hit*, M.E. form of it, 39.48; fallen in with, 138.1
- Hoa*, 113.9
- Hold*, withhold, 141.25; cry of surrender, 224.63
- Hold from*, restrain, 162.19
- Hold rumor*, 162.19
- Hold thee still*, have patience, 111.54
- Holily*, scrupulously, 36.22; after the administration of the sacrament, 195.68
- Holinshead*, Shakspeare's use of, 5 (intro. note); reference to, 6.5, 6.9, 8.22, 8.24, 16.32, 17.39, 19.48, 20.71, 24.120, 24.126, 25.127, 32.37, 34 (intro. note), 45 (intro. note), 88.33, 89 (intro. note), 103.133, 114.18, 130, 131.131, 153.80, 156, 168.1, 174.71, 175.87, 175.89, 177.104, 178.134, 181.157, 190.4, 197.2, 203.8, 226.18, 226.29, 227.41
- Holp*, past participle of *help*, 44.23
- Home*, thoroughly, 24.120
- Homely*, simple, plain, humble, 166.68
- Honest*, seeming true, 24.125
- Honor*, reputation or rank, 58.26; nobility, 120.40
- Hoodwinke*, blindfold, 174.72
- Hope*, ground of confidence, 49.35, 136.30, 171.25
- Horse*, plural form, 87.14, 159.140
- Hose*, breeches, 72.19
- Houre*, appointed hour, 28.147
- Houre accursed*, 159.133
- Housekeeper*, watch-dog, 99.97
- How*, what, 130.128
- How goes the world*, 87.21
- How is 't with*, 69.58
- How sayst thou that*, 130.128
- Howle*, wail, 169.5
- Howlet*, owl, 147.17
- Hum*, to express doubt, 143.42
- Humane*, human, 123.76
- Humh*, interjection of despair, 185.203
- Hurley-burley*, tumult, 3.3
- Husbandry*, careful management, 55.4
- ī*, not shortened in *winde*, 15.11
- I*, aye, yes, 65.17, 104.2
- I cannot tell*, I do not know what to say, 10.39
- Ignorant*, keeping in ignorance, 40.58
- Ill*, dangerous, 25.131
- Ill composed*, badly compounded, 175.77
- Illnesse*, unscrupulousness, 36.21
- Image*, realization by imagination, 26.135; representation, 77.83; type, form, 22.97
- Impersonal idioms: *it will be raine*, 113.16; *it needes* (is necessary), 202.29
- Impresse*, make mark or incision in, 222.39
- In*, by, 225.8; into, 24.126, 73.43; used to express the occasion of an action, 100.107, 170.20; used to express the end of an action, 173.56
- In best time*, 116.5
- In commission*, authorized to hold trial, 30.2
- In fulnesse*, by reason of satiety, 32.34
- In the instant*, at this moment, 40.58
- Indure*, hold out against, withstand, 210.9
- Industrious*, able, efficient, 211.16
- Infinitive construction equivalent to M.N.E. participial phrase, 31.11, 44.22, 50.50, 68.45, 131.134, 143.44, 166.70, 167.79, 201.23, 219.5; without *to*, 131.138; passive, 221.28
- Inform*, to give directions, 37.34; take visible shape, 60.48
- Ingredience*, collective plural, 47.11, 148.34
- Inhabit then*, 126.105
- Initiate feare*, fear of a novice, 132.143

# INDEX TO THE NOTES ON MACBETH

- Innocent*, harmless, 41.66  
*Insane*, making mad, 21.84  
*Insanity*, phenomena of, 200.13  
*Instrumental case*, 84.146  
*Instruments*, means, 98.81  
*Interdiction*, 177.107  
*Interim*, used as noun, 29.154  
*Intermission*, respite, 188.232  
*Interpolations in Macbeth*, 5, 13, 62.62, 132, 133, 134, 149, 151.63, 158.124, 160, 164.38 to 41, 197, 217.47 to 50  
*Interpret*, say explicitly, 18.46, 138.2  
*Intr trenchant*, not to be cut, 222.38  
*Inventer*, contriver, 47.10  
*Invention*, collective plural, 92.33  
*Is*, has to, must, 210.11; auxiliary with verbs of motion, 205.23  
*Is* instead of *has* with verbs of motion, 20.80, 104.1  
*It*, as expression of affection, 34.58  
*Itching thumbs*, 149.43  
*Jealousies*, expressions of distrust, 171.29  
*Jews*, 148.26  
*Jocund*, well pleased, joyful, 109.40  
*Jumpe*, risk, hazard, 47.7  
*Just*, post-positive, 112.4; faithful in personal obligation, 171.30  
*Jutty*, part of a building that leans over the rest, 43.6  
*Kernes*, peasant soldiers, 7.13, 219.17  
*Knit*, to bind, 67.37  
*Knot*, bond, tie, 171.27  
*Know*, acknowledge, 182.165, 194.52  
*Knowings*, experiences, 85.4  
*Lac'd*, ornamented with interlaced bars or cords, 80.118  
*Lacke you*, notice your absence, 124.84; *our lacke*, 188.237  
*Lampe*, applied to sun, 86.7  
*Large*, unrestrained, 116.11  
*Largesse*, gifts (plural), 56.14  
*Last*, rearmost, 156  
*Latch*, catch, 184.195  
*Lated*, made late, 113.6  
*Lavish*, general application of, 13.57  
*Law terms*: *affear'd*, 172.34; *allegiance cleare*, 58.28; *in commission*, 30.2; *copy*, 108.38; *due*, 141.25; *establish estate upon*, 32.37; *exploit*, 159.144; *interdiction*, 177.107; *transposse*, 170.21; unsupported testimony in cases of treason, 191.19  
*Lay*, lodged, 75.59  
*Lease of nature*, 155.99  
*Least*, EL. spelling of, 88.37  
*Leave*, royal permission or final audience, 188.237  
*Leavy*, leafy, 218.1  
*Lees*, collective noun, 78.100  
*Lesser*, used as adverb, 200.13  
*Letter-writing*: folding the paper, 190.7  
*Levie*, act of levying troops, 107.25  
*Like*, an adverb, 28.144  
*Limited*, appointed, 74.56  
*Listning*, listening to, 66.29  
*Lives*, persons, bodies, 221.31  
*Lizards*, 147.17  
*Loone*, Scottish term of abuse, 204.11  
*Loose*, lose, 35.13  
*Loose labour*, 222.37  
*Lord*, husband, 120.53  
*Lost*, bewildered, 70.71  
*Lo you*, 192.21  
*Luxurious*, lecherous, 174.58  
*Lye*, sleep, 65.20; a term in wrestling, 73.47; encamp, 212.3  
*Lyest*, monosyllabic, 167.83, 219.10  
*Lymbeck*, an alembic, still, 53.67  
*Lyne*, furnish, support, 23.112  
*Macbeth tradition*, Slatyer's Palæalbion, 114.18  
*Made*, uttered, 182.169  
*Maggot pye*, magpie, 129.125  
*Maine*, chief, 210.10  
*Majesty plural*, 13.64, 32.37, 115.3, 118.32, 124.90, 179.137  
*Make*, represent to be, 161.4  
*Man*, manhood, manliness, 198.4, 5, 223.47  
*Mansionry*, 43.5  
*Marlet*, swift or swallow, 42.4  
*Marre all*, to spoil everything, 194.51  
*Marrow*, seat of nerve force, 125.94  
*Marry*, to be sure, 138.4  
*Mated*, dazed, 196.86  
*May*, denoting possibility, 101.122, 167.82; denoting obligation, 120.42  
*Meale*, a singular noun, 106.17  
*Meanes* (sing.), medium, instrument, agent, etc., 88.29, 181.163  
*Medical terms*: *perturbation*, 191.10; *distempered*, 200.15, 202.30, 207.45  
*Meere*, absolute, 175.89, 181.152  
*Melt*, fade away, 21.82  
*Memory*. See Psychology  
*Metal*, material, constituent elements, 53.73  
*Metaphysical*, supernatural, 37.30  
*Methinks*, it seems to me, 166.70, 216.34  
*Milke of concord*, 176.98  
*Mind*, in EL. psychology, 94.52, 95.65  
*Mine*, usual form before vowel, 206.36; in my power, 31.20  
*Minions*, darlings, 87.15  
*Minister*, to prescribe, 207.40



# INDEX TO THE NOTES ON MACBETH

- Ministers*, instruments of darkness, 39.49; agents, 227.34
- Minutely*, every minute, 201.18
- Mischance*, misfortune, 120.43
- Misprints in the First Folio edition of *Macbeth*: *barlet* for *marlet*, 42.4; *cyme* for *cenny*, 208.55; *dead* for *head*, 154.97; *her* omitted, 207.39; *indeed* for *in deed*, 132.143; *incarnardine* for *incarnadine*, 69.62; *mansonry* for *mansionry* or *masionry*, 43.5; *must* for *most*, 43.9; ? *Now* for *How*, 97.75; *no* for *do*, 50.47; *prey's* for *preys*, 111.53; ? *pull* for *dull* or *pall*, 216.42; *can* for *ran* or *cam*, 22.98; *sides* for *slides*, 61.55; *sonnes* for *sonne*, 141.24; *Soris* for *Foris*, 17.39; ? *sowre* for *sowrd*, 62.56; *tale* for *haile*, 22.97; ? *then* for *there*, 126.105; *they* for *thy*, 178.133; *they may* for *way they*, 62.57; misplaced line possible, 56.16, 163.22
- Misse*, long for in absence, 225.1
- Missives*, messengers, 35.7
- Moderne*, commonplace, 182.170
- Modest*, sober, 178.119
- Moe*, form of comparative when used as noun with partitive genitive, 206.35
- Monkie*, term of endearment, 166.59
- Monstrous*, trisyllabic in EL. E., 139.8
- Monuments*, tombs, burying-vaults, 122.72
- More*, greater, better, stronger, etc., 29.153; farther, further, 131.137, 226.30
- More* and *lesse*, great ones (nobles) and those of lesser rank, 210.12
- Morrow*, retains its sense of morning, 41.63
- Mortall*, deadly, death-dealing, 38.42, 168.3
- Mortall custome*, 155.100
- Mortified*, benumbed, 198.4, 5
- Most*, best, 82.126; forming superlative of monosyllabic adj., 191.9
- Motion*, expression, 82.129
- Motives*, moving causes for action, 171.27
- Mounch*, to chew with closed lips, 14.5
- Move*, toss, 163.22
- Moves*, angers, 120.46
- Multiplying*, prolific, 7.12
- Mummy*, 147.23
- Mungrels*, sheep-dogs, 99.93
- Muse*, wonder, 124.85
- Must*, expresses fatal necessity as well as moral obligation, 222.41; had to be (originally past tense), 186.212
- My better part of*, the stronger part of my, 223.47
- Napkins*, handkerchiefs, 72.8
- Nature*, character, disposition, 26.137, 36.17, 174.67, 178.125; essential characteristics, 87.16; life, vitality, 53.68, 64.7, 80.119, 108.38, 118.28, 131.141; natural feeling, sympathy, 39.46
- Naught*, wicked, 187.225
- Nave*, (?) navel, 8.22
- Navigation*, shipping, 150.54
- Needs*, it is necessary, 112.2
- Neere*, a comparative form, 84.146
- Nerves*, sinews, 126.102
- Neutrall*, indifferent, 79.115
- Newest*, latest, 6.3, 183.174
- Newly*, anew, 226.31
- Newts*, 147.14
- Next*, nearest, 216.39
- Nice*, used of figurative language, 183.174
- Night gowne*, dressing-gown, 70.70, 190.5
- Night shrieke*, hooting of night-owl, 213.11
- No lesse*, as much, 32.30; *no other*, nothing else, 126.97; *no other but*, no one besides (or) not otherwise than, 210.8
- None*, not one (man), 50.47
- Non-pareill*, the star of one's profession, 117.17
- Nor*, and not, 8.21, 39.47
- Nor . . nor*, 107.24, 217.48
- Norwayes*, Norwegians, 13.59
- Note*, importance, 109.44, 220.21; list, 113.10; to pay attention to, 121.56
- Nothing*, used as an adverb, 22.96, 201.20, 209.2
- Notion*, understanding, 98.83
- Noyse*, applied to musical sounds, 155.106; clamour, outcries, 212.7
- Oblivious*, causing forgetfulness, 207.43
- Obscure*, haunting the darkness, 75.64
- Occasion*, necessity, 70.70
- Of*, by, 7.13, 138.4, 141.27; from, 153.82; away from, 37.36; with, 175.89; before direct object after present active participles, 75.63
- Of all men else*, more than any one else, 222.33
- Of old*, formerly, 44.18
- Off*, away, 227.37
- Offend*, injure, 121.57
- Office*, performance of duty, 83.142; part, 112.3
- Offices*, apartments of domestics, 56.14
- Oh! ah!* 194.59
- Old*, expletive word in EL. E., 71.3; senior, 178.134
- Omission of subject and predicate, 108.32, 118.31, 160.153, 184.191, 185.197
- Omission of verb of motion, 179.136
- Omitted relative, 219.7
- On*, of, 73.46, 100.114, 195.71

# INDEX TO THE NOTES ON MACBETH

- One*, not yet *wən*, 146.7, 227.40; person, 131.131
- Onely*, position of, 31.20, 126.98; *onely to*, merely in order to, 23.102
- Open*, disclose, 173.52
- Oppos'd*, an adversary, 223.60
- Or ere*, even before, 183.173
- Order*, plan of battle, 218.6
- Oreleape*, 48.27
- Other*, plural, 15.14; otherwise, 53.77; second, 157.114
- Ours*, belonging to our side, 212.5
- Out*, away from home (and hence) under arms, 184.183
- Overcome*, come over, pass over, 127.111
- Owe*, possess, 20.76, 30.10, 128.113
- Paint*, advertise, 223.55
- Pall*, lose will power, 216.42
- Palter*, dodge off and on, 223.49
- Paralell*, bring into comparison with, 76.67
- Parted*, departed, 226.18
- Participial construction for relative clause, 223.60; with indirect-discourse verbs, 173.50, 220.22
- Particulars*, peculiar characteristics, 173.51
- Partitive genitive, 20.80
- Partner*, companion, 19.54, 28.142
- Passion*, paroxysm, 121.57
- Past participles, strong in EL. E., 30.3, 152.65; monosyllabic, 38.39; without suffix, 127.109, 141.38; used as adjectives, 97.80
- Past tense: suffix *-ed* making separate syllable, 177.111
- Patch*, fool, 204.15
- Pawser*, loiterer, 79.117
- Pay*, reward, 158.132
- Peake*, grow sickly, 16.23
- Pearle*, collective plural in EL. E., 226.22
- Pent-house*, curtain, 15.20
- Perfect*, familiar with, informed, 35.3, 166.66; in sound mental health, sane, 117.21
- Perfect spy*, 102.130
- Personal ending of third attached to second person, 216.39
- Perturbation*, anxiety, 191.10
- Pester'd*, hampered, cumbered (applied to overloaded stomach), 201.23
- Petty*, wide range of use in EL. E., 214.20
- Physick*, heal, 74.55
- Pitfall*, 164.35
- Pit of Acheron*, 135.15
- Pittiful*, feeling pity, 110.47
- Place*, hawking term, 86.12
- Planted*, established, 226.31
- Pleas't*, retaining subjunctive idiom, 120.44
- Pluckes*, holds back, 178.119
- Plural, inflectionless: *business*, 135.22; *mile*, 216.37; *sense*, 192.28
- Point*, reason, 98.86; *at a point*, ready, 178.135
- Poorely*, spiritlessly, 70.72
- Portable*, endurable, 175.89
- Portents of Duncan's murder, 87.18
- Possessive case. See Genitive
- Posters*, couriers, 16.33
- Poure*, pour out, 202.28
- Power*, troops, 184.185, 188.236
- Beyond my practice*, outside my experience, 195.66
- Prayers*, dissyllabic, 66.25
- Predicate, omission of, 9.26, 29.152, 30.1, 60.46, 131.132; singular with plural subject, 28.147, 62.61, 84.146, 85.6, 108.37, 123.78
- Predominance*, astrological influence, 86.8
- Preposition, repetition of, 131.137
- Present*, to show, 108.31; attendant, 62.59; present before one, 26.137; immediate, 13.64
- Presently*, immediately, 180.145
- Present participle of monosyllabic verbs ending in long vowel, 43.6
- Pretend*, aim at, 87.24
- Pretense*, intention, purpose, 83.137
- Preys*, distributive plural, 111.53
- Primrose way*, 72.24
- Prince of Cumberland, 29, 32.37
- Printing, peculiarities of Elizabethan, 20.79
- Prithee*, 78.94, 111.56
- Probation*, proving, 97.80
- Produce forth*, bring forth into light, 227.34
- Professe*, claim to know, 150.50; declare adherence to, 221.27
- Profound*, of deep significance, 136.24
- Prolepsis, 42.3
- Pronounc'd*, proclaimed, 203.5
- Pronouns, personal, used reflexively, 186.214, 202.29; used indefinitely, 55.5, 175.80; possessive, denoting family, retinue, property, etc., 44.26, 212.5, 222.35; reflexive, used as subjects without strengthening pronouns, 90.5; relative used as connective, 8.21, 37.37, 101.122; standing for word to be supplied from context, 128.116
- Proper*, fine, 121.60
- Proportion*, portion, allotment, 31.19
- Prosody. See Rhythm, Versification, Stress
- Prosperous*, turning out well (or) favourable, 91.22
- Protest*, proclaim, make public declaration of, 126.105; put in evidence, 199.11

# INDEX TO THE NOTES ON MACBETH

- Proverbs and proverbial expressions: *blood will have blood*, 128.122; *death cancels all bonds*, 110.49; *from the top to the toe*, 38.43; *the farmer that hanged himself*, 71.6; *naught's had . . . without content*, 104.4; *neere in blood, etc.*, 84.146; *the night is long that never finds the day*, 188.240; *cat that would eat fish*, 49.45; *things at the worst*, 164.24; *time and the houre*, 28.147
- Psychology of Shakspeare's time: anxiety, 15.18; corporal agents, 53.80, 70.68; *ego*, 26; gall, 39.49; genius, 94.56; hallucinations, 122, 124, 125; heart the seat of will, 159.147; heat-oppressed brain, 59.39; marrow, 125.94; melancholy, 38.44, 67.35, 105.8; memorie, 52.65; motion, 82.129; phantasy, 56.9; senses, 212.10; spirits, 13.56, 39.50; suggestion, 191, 195.74; will, 26, 39.47
- Pull in*, 216.42
- Punctuation, alterations of, which confuse the sense, 23.102, 88.27, 88.37, 90.7, 93.48, 96.71, 128.122, 130.128, 134.2, 146.10, 154.97, 169.15, 198.4, 5, 204.21, 205.27; of anacolutha, 102.127, 148.31, 204.19; of clauses, 13.56, 97.80, 100.102, 108.32; close, 145.2; colon a light point in EL. printing, 146.7; of exclamations, 11.45, 51.59, 69.59, 157.116; hyphens: *more-having*, 175.81; *sainted-king*, 177.109; misprints in, 24.120, 146.5; quotation-marks, 67.35, 145.3
- Puns. See Double meaning
- Purge*, remedy, 123.76; to cure, 208.52
- Purveyor*, caterer, 44.22
- Push*, test, issue, 204.21
- Put in your bosomes*, confide to you, 100.104
- Put on*, set to work, 188.239
- Put to*, confide in, 178.122
- Put upon*, address with, 95.58; accuse of, 53.70
- Pyramid*, steeple, spire, 150.57
- Quarrell*, cause, claim, 179.137
- Quarry*, heap of slain, 7.14; heap of slaughtered game, 186.206
- Quell*, murder, 53.72
- Quench*, smother vital energy, 63.2
- Question*, talk with, 18.43; inquire into, 83.134; discussion, 128.118
- r*, vowel sound developed out of, 38.40, 108.30, 139.8
- Rancours*, 95.67
- Rapt*, 28.142
- The rather . . . for that*, the more strongly because, 184.184
- Ravel'd*, entangled, 67.37
- Raven up*, devour, 88.28
- Ravin'd*, gorged with prey, 148.24
- Ravishing*, rapid, swift, 61.55
- Rawnesse*, rashness, cruelty, 171.26
- Reades in*, infers from, 22.91
- Readinesse*, associated with dress in EL. E., 83.139
- Rebellious head*, 154.97
- Rebuked*, checked, restrained, 94.56
- Receit*, treasury, 52.66
- Receiv'd*, believed, 53.74
- Reckon with*, render account for, 226.27
- Recorded time*, 214.21
- Recoyle*, break, 201.23; give way, break down, 170.19
- Reflection*, direct shining, 9.25
- Relate*, give utterance to, 211.19
- Relation*, report, 183.173
- Relations*, utterances, 129.124
- Rellish of*, trace of, 176.95
- Remembrance*, consideration, 108.30; has four syllables, 108.30
- Remembrancer*, prompter, monitor, 119.37
- Remorse*, compassion, 38.45
- Rendred*, surrendered, 220.24
- Rent*, rend, tear, 182.168
- Repeat*, reiterate charges, 177.112
- Repetition*, utterance, 78.90
- Repetitions*, 207.44, 226.26, 227.38
- Report*, statement of facts, 35.3; with objective modifier, 141.38, 209.7
- Require*, ask for, 116.6
- I require*, it is necessary for me to have, 103.133
- Resolve your selves*, come to your decision, 103.137
- Rest*, remain, 44.20; sleep, 207.39; ease, idleness, 33.44
- Restlesse*, that gives no rest, 106.22
- Retreat*, signal for giving up the pursuit, 225
- Revolt*, desertion, 210.12
- Rhythm*: adapted to thought, 3.1, 4.7, 13, 19.48, 19.62, 21.81, 41.60, 42.3, 44.20, 53.72, 63.1, 65.17, 68.43, 107.23, 128.122, 133, 138.7, 140.17, 149.38, 151.59, 152.71, 169.12, 196.79, 197.87, 204.10, 214.19, 215, 216.38, 224.62; cadence-rhythm, 16.33; falling rhythm suited to supernatural interests, 133; prose rhythms, 72.28, 192.24 to 30; reversal of, 31.16, 97.77, 120.50
- Ride*, peculiar use of, 91.19
- Right*, claim to the throne, 172.42



# INDEX TO THE NOTES ON MACBETH

- Rightly*, really, perfectly, 171.30  
*Rise*, to break up a meeting, 120.52  
 The Roman fool, 221.30  
 Ronsard's description of James V, 157  
*Ronyon*, scurvy person, 14.6  
*Rookie*, full of rooks, or (?) misty, 111.51  
*Roote*, progenitor, 90.5  
*Rore*, more dignified than in MN. E., 53.78  
 Rosse, personal characteristics, 183.174  
*Round*, circlet, crown, 37.29, 154.88  
*Royalty of nature*, fitness for kingship, 94.50  
*Rubs*, rough places on bowling-green, 103.134  
*Rugged*, wrinkled, 107.27; shaggy, fierce, 126.100  
*Rule*, regimen, to control, 201.16  
*Rumpe-fed*, 14.6  
*Run*, past tense of to run, 79.117  
*Outrun*, 79.117  
*Russian beare*, 126.100  
  
*Safeties*, safeguards, 171.30  
*Safety*, trisyllabic, 94.54, 171.30  
*Sagge*, 204.10  
*Sainted*, saint-like, holy, 177.109  
*Sanctity*, miraculous power, 179.144  
*Satisfie*, assure, 155.104, 192.36  
*Sauce*, a provocative of appetite, 175.81  
*Savage*, brutal, 166.70  
*Say*, tell, 6.6, 104.3, 216.32; absolute use of, 186.213  
*Scan'd*, judged, 131.140  
 Scene directions in Macbeth are modern additions, 144, 190  
 Scene division, alteration of FO.'S, 62, 221.30  
*Schoole*, reprove, 162.15  
  
*Schreemes of death*, 75.61  
*Scone*, 88.31, 227.40  
*Scorch'd*, hacked, lacerated, 105.13  
*Scruples*, doubts, 83.135, 178.116  
*Seare*, withered, dry, 205.23  
*Season*, a preservative from decay, 131.141  
*Seat*, site, 42.1  
*Seated*, fixed, 26.136  
*Second cock*, 72.30  
*Second course*, 68.39  
*Secret*, occult, 150.48  
*Security*, confidence, 136.32  
*Seedes*, descendants, 96.70  
*Seeling*, term of falconry, 110.46  
*Seem to*, to be on the point of, 9.25, 11.47, 37.30  
*Seeming*, belonging to, suitable to, appearing, 175.86  
*Seest*, a monosyllable, 85.5  
*Selfe*, as an adjective, 227.36; as first element of compound words, 12.55, 132.142  
*Sell*, deceive, betray, 165.41  
*Send*, send a messenger, 130.129, 142.39, 208.49  
*Senit*, set of notes on the trumpet, 90.10  
*Sense*, plural without suffix, 192.28  
*Sensible*, perceptible, 59.36  
*Sergeant*, a trisyllable, 6.3  
*Service*, course, 45  
*Set forth*, declare publicly, 30.6  
*Setons of Touch*, 206.33  
*Setting downe before*, besieging, 210.10  
*Settled*, determined, 53.79  
*Sev'night*, week, 16.22  
*Sewer*, chief butler, 45  
*Shadow*, spectral illusion, 215.24; to conceal, 209.5  
*Shagge-ear'd*, 167.83  
*Shall*, ought to, must, 43.13, 170.20, 211.18; may, am going to, 171.31; *shall be*, will be, will come to be, 122.73  
  
*Shall and will*, use of, in EL. E., 102.126  
*Shame*, to avoid with sense of shame, 70.64  
*Shame it selfe*, 121.66  
*Shard*, scaly wing-case, 109.42  
*Sharks*, 148.24  
*Shew*, pageant or procession, 156; to appear, 19.54; let one know, 156.107; disclose oneself, 218.2  
*Shew'd*, disclosed, told, 57.21; appeared, looked, 8.15  
*Shift*, to practise knavery, 84.151  
*Shine*, reflect glory and honor, 90.7  
*Ship of Fooles*, the, referred to, 214.19  
*Shipman*, mariner, 15.17  
*Shipman's card*, compass, 15.17  
*Shooke hands*, 8.21  
*Should*, 18.45, 82.127, 166.73, 172.49, 213.17, 216.31, 220.20. See *Shall*  
*Showgh*, shock, rough, shaggy dog, 99.93  
*Shut up in*, restricted to, 56.16  
*Sight*, perception by sight, 77.76, 196.86; portent or pageant, 160.155  
*Sightlesse*, invisible, 39.50, 48.23  
*Signes*, marks of distinction, 33.41  
*Silenc'd*, at a non plus, 22.93  
*Silver*, connoting whiteness, 80.118  
*Single*, simple, united, harmonious, 27.139; trivial, 44.16  
*-sion*, dissyllabic, 8.18  
*Sir*, address to majesty, 130.129, 181.163  
*Sirrha*, use of, 93.45, 164.30  
*Skarfe up*, blindfold, 110.47  
*Skirre*, to flit, to pass hurriedly over, 206.35  
*Slab*, miry, sticky, pasty, 148.32

# INDEX TO THE NOTES ON MACBETH

- Slaughterous thoughts*, murderous impulses, 213.14  
*Sleave*, unspun silk, 67.37  
*Sleeke*, to smooth out, 107.27  
*Sleep*, 77.79, 154.86  
*Sleepie*, plunged in sleep, 68.50  
*Slides*, glides, 61.55  
*Slights*, arts, contrivances, 136.26  
*Slip*, let slip, 74.52  
*Slippes*, small branches, 148.27  
*Sliver'd*, lopped off, clipped, 148.28  
*Slope*, incline, 150.57  
*Slumbry*, occurring in sleep, 191.12  
*Smells*, breathes upon, 43.6  
*So*, used to represent preceding notion, 60.47, 171.24; without *as*, 74.56  
*So as*, as . . as, 10.43  
*Society*, social intercourse, 93.42; company, 115.3  
*Sodaine*, sudden, 174.59  
*Sole*, mere, 169.12  
*Solemne*, ceremonial, 91.14  
*Solicites*, wins the favour of, 180.149  
*Soliciting*, advocacy of one's interests, 25.130  
*Something*, somewhat, 103.132  
*Sometime*, sometimes, 43.11  
*Sore*, grievous, 85.3  
*Sorrow*, monosyllabic, 82.129  
*Sorryest*, most gloomy, 105.9  
*Sorts*, classes, 49.33  
*Soule*, person, 98.83  
*Soundly*, heartily, 52.63  
*Soveraigne*, used of potency for healing, 202.30  
*Sowre*, saturnine, 62.56  
*Spacious plenty*, unrestricted license, 174.71  
*Spaniels*, 99.93  
*Speake*, confer, 41.72, 97.74; prove, 181.159  
*Speaker*, reporter, 183.175  
*Speculation*, power of vision, 126.95  
*Speeches*, statements, 90.7, 97.76, 138.1  
*Spelling*: anomalous in *bolter'd*, 157.123; *a* for *ea* in *heart*, 155.100; M.E. *ai* retained in unstressed syllables, 4.4, 86.7, 107.25, 174.59; *ay* for MN.E. *ey*, 204.16; *c* corresponding to MN.E. *s*, 61.53, 208.55; *e* for *i* in *cistern*, 174.63; *ea* representing M.E. long open *e* in *lest*, 88.37; in *seaventh*, 157.118; *ea* and *ee* confused, 67.37; *ea* and *ee* before or after *n* and *r*, 75.61, 172.34; possible mistake of *ee* for *ai*, 204.21; *ei* representing *i*, 37.29; M. E. *gh* retained in *high*, 37.26; unhistoric *gh* in *spite*, 100.111; *gu* before palatal vowels, 181.157; loss of *h*, 44.20; long open *ō* in *oh*, 183.173; *oo* before *r* and consonant, 178.135; *oo* (= *ū*) representing *ou*, 162.14; past tense of verbs in *-en*, *-er*, 220.24; phonetic: *hoboyes*, 42; *skirre*, 206.35; *unruffe*, 199.10; *-que*, suffix corresponding to MN.E. *c*, 20.78, 107.25; *sch* and *sc* confused, 75.61; *sh* and *sch* confused, 46.6; *-t* in past participles, 19.57, 177.107; *tha* Latin form of *t*, 121.66; *u* before *l* and consonant, 86.12; *u* corresponding to MN.E. *ou*, 48.23; *u* written *w* before a consonant, 152.64; miscellaneous: *humane* for *human*, 36.18; *I* for *aye*, 65.17; *ingredience*, 47.11; *kalender*, 159.134; *metal* and *mettle* not distinguished, 53.73; *schoole*, 46.6; *too* and *to* not distinguished, 73.42  
*Spirit*, monosyllabic, 38.41, 102.128  
*Spirits*, vigour, energy, 13.56, 37.27  
*Spoke*, spoken, 169.11  
*Spoken*, currently reported, 181.154  
*Sprights*, spirits, 77.84, 136.27, 158.127  
*Spring*, sunrise, 9.25  
*Spy o' th' time*, 102.130  
*Staffe*, baton, 208.48  
*Stage* direction, altered by modern editors, 10.43, 64.9, 119.39, 125.93, 149.39; "enter" means takes part in action, 56.9; "enter" means re-enter, 78.95, 97.73; intruded from margin of MS., 77.85, 115.1; meaning of *torches* in, 42; omitted in FO., 55.5, 65.20, 212.8, 122.73; pantomimic, 224.63  
*Stampe*, coin, 181.153  
*Stand*, stand still, 66.24, 158.126  
*Stand close*, keep hidden, 192.23  
*Stand not*, attach no importance to, 128.119  
*Starres*, all heavenly bodies, 34.50  
*Start*, to tremble, 194.51, 213.15  
*State*, throne, chair of state, 116.5  
*State of honor*, rank, 166.66  
*State of man*, 27.140  
*Station*, bearing, 225.8  
*Staunchlesse*, normal compound from *staunch*, that which quenches, 175.78  
*Staves*, spears, 219.18  
*Stay*, wait for, 179.142  
*Step*, round of ladder, promotion, 33.48  
*Stept in*, advanced in, 131.137  
*Stern'st*, grimest, 63.4  
*Stick deep*, take deep root, 94.49, 175.85  
*Sticking on his hands*, 201.17  
*Sticking-place* of crossbow, 52.60

# INDEX TO THE NOTES ON MACBETH

- Still*, always, 43.12, 45.28, 47.8, 58.27
- Stirre*, action, activity, 28.144
- Stoole*, chair, 122.68
- Stout*, proud, 22.95
- Straight*, immediately, 103.140
- Strange*, unfamiliar, 28.145, 41.64, 128.112
- Stress*, in general: 49.30, 90.2, 92.29, 116.9, 164.36, 167.76, 171.30, 220.20, 222.32, 223.51; lack of, producing contractions—pronouns: *it* reduced to 't, 6.7, 58.25, 140.16, 154.89, 160.149, 174.67; *them* reduced to 'em, 64.13, 151.63; *us* reduced to 's, 24.125, *his* reduced to 's, 44.24, 81.124; definite article: *the* reduced to *th'*, 4.5, 21.88, 38.43, 56.16, 90.2, 131.133, and cp. 14.7, 15.17, 36.18; substantive verb: *am* reduced to 'm, 26.133, 53.79, 100.108, 167.74; *is* reduced to 's, 8.15, 94.54, 183.174; *are* reduced to 'r, 116.8; *was* reduced to 's, 8.15, 66.23; *were* reduced to 'r, 8.15; other verbs: *have* reduced to 'v, 114.20, 167.74, 180.149; *has* reduced to 's, 196.86; *would* reduced to 'd, 58.23; prepositions: *in* reduced to 'i, 14.7, 15.17; *of* reduced to o', 14.7, 36.18; *to* reduced to t', 44.24, 130.129; *do* an unstressed word: *I sháll dō só*, 187.220; 't *is done*, 46.1; *múst do*, 36.24; *wéll dōne*, 149.39; *minestressed* in *mine öwne*, 131.135, 171.30; *it is öne*, 74.54; in repetitions: *spéak, spéak*, 78.88; *Gód, Gód*, 196.83; in simple words: *accésse*, 38.45; *authorized*, 121.66; *báboon*, 148.37; *chástise*, 37.28; *Héccat*, 60.52, 109.41; *minutely*, 201.18; *öbscure*, 75.64; *perséverance*, 176.93; *púrveyör*, 44.22; *théreby*, 209.5; *instrúment*, 98.81; in compound words: *hálfewórlð*, 60.49; *leávetáking*, 84.150, 171.28; *mánkínde*, 87.18
- Strike*, smite with mysterious power, 187.225
- Strong*, violent, 82.129
- Strooke*, c.N. E. past participle and past tense of *strike*, 187.225
- Studied*, trained, practised, 30.9
- Stuffe*, rant, 121.60
- Style*, 73.47, 78.96
- Subborned*, instigated to crime, 87.24
- Subject*, object, 113.8
- Subject*, omission of, 163.23, 210.9; repeated by pronoun, 164.36
- Subjunctive forms*: See *Dare, Pleas't*
- Subjunctive idioms*: *do*, 218.7; *rise*, 154.97
- Successes*, issue, 26.132
- Suffer*, perish, 106.16
- Suffixes*. See under separate suffixes
- Suggestion*, temptation, 26.134
- Suicide* intended by Macbeth, 215
- Summer*, pleasant, 175.86
- Sundry*, distinct, diverse, 172.48
- Superlative*, formed by *-st*: *kindst*, 58.24; *neerst*, 101.118; *perfectst*, 35.3; *secretst*, 129.126; *sternst*, 63.4; used substantively, 101.118
- Superstitions*: croaking of ravens, 38.39; venomous beasts, 146.8
- Supply'd*, reinforced, 7.13
- Surcease*, cessation, 46.4
- Surmise*, accuse, charge, 27.141
- Survey*, discern, 9.31
- Swarme*, used of mobs, 7.12
- Sway by*, govern by, hold prestige by, 204.9
- Sweares*, swears allegiance, 165.47
- Sweat for 't*, pay the penalty, 72.9
- Swelling*, proud, magnificent, 25.128
- Swelter*, exude, 146.8
- Sworne to*, sworn to do, 51.58
- Syncopations* (loss of medial unstressed syllable): *abso-lute*, 31.14, 172.38; *alarum*, 218.10; *ceremony*, 119.36; *confident*, 210.8; *conference*, 97.79; *credulous*, 178.120; *dangerous*, 167.77; *desolate*, 168.1; *enemy*, 100.105, 115; *gentlemen*, 25.129; *heavily*, 184.182; *herbenger*, 33.45; *innocent*, 41.66, 67.36, 97.79, 110.45, 170.16; *intemperance*, 174.66; *invisible*, 110.48; *laudable*, 167.76; *majestie*, 44.18; *medicine*, 202.27; *minister*, 39.49, 207.40, 46; *mock'ry* (so printed), 127.107; *myraculous*, 180.147; *nourisher*, 68.40; *perilous*, 207.44; *perseverance*, 176.93; *pittifull*, 110.47, 181.151; *purgative*, 208.55; *ravishing*, 61.55; *resolute*, 153.79; *speculative*, 211.19; *surfeted*, 64.5; *terrible*, 11.51, 106.18, 123.78; *treachery*, 114.17; *treacherous*, 170.18; *treasonous*, 83.138; *unfortunate*, 160.152; *unnatural*, 86.10, 196.80; *verity*, 176.92; *visited*, 181.150
- Taint*, wither, 203.3
- Take off*, discourage, 73.41
- Taking off*, death, 47.20, 100.105
- Tautology*, 10.38
- Teach*, implying teaching by example, 43.12, 47.8



# INDEX TO THE NOTES ON MACBETH

- Teare*, mangle, 139.12  
*Tearmes*, names, epithets, 222.37  
*Teemes*, gives birth to, 183.176  
*Tender*, exciting commiseration, 51.55  
*Tending*, attention, 37.38  
*Tense*, historical present and past tenses in same narrative, 8.15; past corresponding to MN. E. perfect, 11.48; present as future, 4.8  
*Th*, loss of intervocalic, 219.18; Latin *t*, 121.66  
*Than* and *then*, same word, 20.75  
*That* (pron.), corresponding to MN. E. *such*, *such a*, 171.26, 175.74; *to that*, to that end, 7.10; *that their fitness*, 50.53  
*That* (conj.), because, 47.8; particles strengthened by, 12.54, 108.32, 177.106; repeats connective, 23.113, 46.4; so that, 13.58, 19.57, 66.23, 169.6, 175.82  
*The*. See Article, definite  
*Theame*, used of action as well as of discourse, 25.129  
*Their*, corresponding to MN. his, 113.14; misprinted for *the*, and vice versa, 141.38  
*Theirs*, their property, 44.26  
*There is*, with plural complement, 204.13  
*Therewithall*, besides that, 92.34  
*These*, such as these, 67.33, 178.118  
*The time*, the moment, 41.65; the world, 41.64, 174.72, 226.21  
*Thickens*, becomes obscure, 111.50  
*Thine*, thy family, thy house, 222.35  
*Things*, applied to persons to connote absence of volition, 210.13  
*Thinke*, to pay heed to, 57.21; *thinke on*, bring to mind, 105.11  
*Think'st*, hast in mind, 172.35  
*Thirst*, long for, 124.91  
*Thought*, purpose, design, hope, expectation, etc., 27.139, 38.42, 178.116; looked at, considered, regarded, 67.33; *thoughts*, anxieties, 105.10, 138.1, 170.21  
*Thriftlesse*, greedy, 88.28  
*Thrusts*, hampers, besets, 101.117  
*Tidings*, singular, 37.31  
*-tience*, dissyllabic, 8.18  
*Time*, appointment, 92.37; fitting time, 28.147, 213.18; tune, measure, 188.235; wide range of association of the word, 19.58  
*Time analysis*, 89  
*Time of helpe*, opportunity for military aid to be sent, 184.186  
*Timely*, early, 74.51; opportune, welcome, 113.7  
*Times*, manners, customs, 123.78; *times has*, 123.78  
*-tion*, dissyllabic, 8.18, 37.34  
*Title*, claim, 172.34, 201.20  
*Titles*, title-deeds, 161.7  
*To*, according to, 109.41, 112.4; besides, 7.10; compared to, 121.64; in addition to, 44.19, 94.52; until, 214.21; *to friend*, 169.10  
*Top*, pitch of attainment, 154.89; to surpass, 173.57  
*Torch*, bearer of a torch, 42, 55  
*Torture*, the rack, 106.21  
*Touch*, to injure, 107.26, 169.14; sympathy, 162.9  
*Toward*, monosyllable, 29.152  
*Towring*, hawking term, 86.12  
*Toyes*, trifles, 78.99  
*Trace*, follow, 160.153  
*Traines*, tricks, 178.118  
*Trammell up*, net up, 46.3  
*Transport*, used of carrying news, etc., 183.181  
*Transpose*, change, alter the nature of, 170.21  
*Travail*, not distinguished from *travel* in EL. E., 86.7  
*Treatise*, story, narration, 213.12  
*Trenched*, deep-cut, 118.27  
*Trifled*, made a jest of, 85.4  
*Trifles*, tricks, 24.125  
*Trouble*, physical annoyance, 147.18, 196.80  
*True*, applied to things as well as persons, 211.15; rightful, legitimate, 177.106  
*Truly*, really, according to nature, 178.131  
*Try the last*, 224.61  
*Tune*, rhythm, 21.87  
*Turke* and *Tartar*, 148.29  
*Twaine*, originally masc. form of *two*, 92.28  
*Twenty*, indefinite numeral, 123.81  
*Tyranny*, usurpation, 171.32, 174.67  
*Tyrant*, usurper, 140.22  
  
*ū* not shortened and developed into *ə* in *blood*, 131.136; in *strooke*, 187.225; development of *u* before *l* and consonant, 86.12  
*un-*, wide use of, to express negation, 37.26, 73.36, 199.10  
*Uncle*, use of term in EL. E., 197.2  
*Undaunted*, undaunted, fearless, 53.73  
*Undeuded*, 220.20  
*Under fortune*, exposed to danger, 97.78  
*Under his key*, in his power, 140.18  
*Unfixe*, loosen, 26.135  
*Universal peace*, 176.99  
*Unlineal*, 95.63  
*Unmake*, mar, 50.54  
*Unmannerly breech'd with gore*, 80.122  
*Unnaturall*, violating natural instincts, 196.80; unusual, 196.80

# INDEX TO THE NOTES ON MACBETH

- Unruffe*, beardless, 199.10  
*Unsafe*, insecure, 108.32  
*Unsafe the while*, 108.32  
*Unsanctified*, without sanctuary, 167.81  
*Upon*, to speak the contrary of, 178.123  
*Untitled*, having no claim, 177.104  
*Upbraid*, to cast in one's teeth, 201.18  
*Upon*, concerning, 91.16; denoting the thing affected by the action, 177.112; in temporal phrases, 121.55; over, 203.7; *upon his ayd*, with his support, 141.30; *upon the foot of*, ready to start upon, 82.129  
*Uprore*, break up in revolution, 176.99  
*Use*, custom, 13.62, 26.137; to familiarize with, 105.10  
*Utterance*, uttermost, 96.72
- u*, intervocalic, loss of: *devil*, 23.107; *even like*, 86.11; *ever*, 155.102; *given*, 119.35  
*Valued file*, price-list, 99.95  
*Vantage*, opportunity, 9.31, 23.113  
*Vaulting*, an EL. sport, 48.28  
Verbs ending in *-en*, *-er*, past tense and participles of, 220.24  
*Verity*, truthfulness, 90.8; faithfulness, 176.92  
Verses wrongly divided in FO. I: 14.7, 21.81, 28.149, 30.1, 32.25, 42.1, 44.18, 55.4, 56.13, 58.25, 72.28, 82.129, 87.18, 93.43, 97.75, 98.85, 108.32, 110.49, 113.9, 158.133  
Versification: alexandrine, 203.5; couplet at end of scene, 54.81, 82; extra-metrical words and phrases, 93.40, 100.108, 113.9; extra unstressed impulse at beginning, 8.20, 11.46; extra impulse before caesura, 18.43, 29.150, 31.16, 95.57, 98.83, 100.108, 124.84, 164.36, 174.59, 203.7, 223.56; four-wave verses 6.7, 9.26, 21.88, 100.103, 158.124, 170.18; loss of unstressed impulse after caesura, 4.7, 6.5, 38.41, 60.51, 64.13, 170.18, 172.34; loss of unstressed impulse at beginning of verse, 131.133; in middle of verse, 146.6; six-wave verses, 10.38, 23.111, 78.88, 103.139, 170.20, 176.97, 178.116  
*Vertue*, power, 181.156  
*Very*, intensifies the noun, giving sense of exactly, 192.22  
*Vile*, wicked, malicious, 100.109  
*Visited*, afflicted, 181.150  
*Vizards*, masks, 108.34
- w*, intervocalic, lost, 29.152, 225.7; written form of *u* before consonant, 152.64  
*Waile*, bewail, 169.8  
*Wake*, rouse, 141.31  
*Walke*, be abroad, 138.7  
*Walk'd*, of unconscious locomotion, 190.3  
*Wanton*, capricious, 32.34  
*Warlike*, stronger word in EL. E., 224.62  
*Warranted*, justified, authorized, guaranteed, 179.137  
*Warre*, contest, quarrel, 211.21; battle, 221.26  
*Wassell*, carousing, 52.64  
*Wastfull*, devastating, 80.120  
*Watch*, any instrument to tell time, 61.54; to sit up at night, 190.1, 191.12; cp. 70.71  
*Water-rugs*, 99.93  
*Way of life*, 205.22  
*Way to death*, 214.23  
*Wee stay upon your leysure*, 28.148  
*Weare*, display, 172.46; proclaim, maintain, 171.33  
*Wearie*, disgusted, sick, 100.112  
*Wee'l heare ourselves againe*, 118.32  
*Wel at peace*, 183.179  
*Welcome*, pledge of welcome, 116.6  
*Weyward*, form of the word, 17  
Weyward sisters, 14.1, 16.32  
*What*, what kind of, 17.39, 69.59, 155.106, 172.49  
*What used for who*, 72.21, 219.2  
*What*, why, 193.41  
*What*, that which is, 227.37  
*What is the night*, 129.126  
*When 'tis*, when the time comes, 58.25  
*Where*, relatively used adv., 167.82, 182.166, 225.8  
*Whereabout*, whereabouts, 62.58  
*Whereto*, to which, 52.62  
*Whether*, form of *whither*, 166.73  
*Which*, for what, 135.10; referring to persons, 91.16  
*While*, until, 93.44; *the while*, so long as, 108.32  
*Whiles*, whilst, while, 35.6, 62.60, 221.31  
*Whisper*, whisper to, 186.210  
*Whisp'rings*, insinuations, slanders, 196.79  
*Who*, he who, 23.109  
*Wholsome*, prosperous, healthy, 177.105  
*Wilde*, strange, fantastic, 18.40  
*Will*, pleasure, appetite, 101.120, 174.65, 175.88  
*Will to hand*, 131.139  
*Wing*, flight, 31.17  
*Winke*, keep the eyes closed, 34.52  
*Wise*, prudent, 79.114  
*Wish*, to commend, 226.15

# INDEX TO THE NOTES ON MACBETH

- Witchcraft. See Demonology  
 Witches. See Demonology  
*With*, by, 22.93, 95.63, 100.  
 112, 177.104; by means  
 of, 164.32, 213.13; in ac-  
 cordance with, 227.31; in  
 addition to, 175.76, 181.156  
*Withall*, with, 37.31; with  
 it, etc., 19.57, 56.15, 68.56;  
 in addition to this, more-  
 over, 172.41  
*Wither'd*, colorless, ghastly,  
 60.52  
*Without*, outside of, on the  
 outside, 93.47, 116.14  
*Witnesse*, evidence, 68.47  
*Witnest*, attested, 184.184  
*Womanly*, weak, unmanly,  
 167.78  
 Word order, 9.29, 65.17, 75.  
 62, 91.19, 107.27, 143.49,  
 152.64, 165.58, 200.11, 202.  
 25, 212.7, 216.30  
*Worme*, snake, 118.29  
*Worthy*, brave, 11.45; able,  
 strong, possessing power  
 or wealth, 184.183  
*Would*, are ready for, must  
 have, 198.4, 5, 227.31; must  
 inevitably have been, 213.  
 18; *would be*, is to be, must  
 be, 94.51; *would not*, do  
 not want to, 56.7  
*Wouldst*, desirest, 36.19  
*Wrack*, destruction, 218.51  
*Wrestling*, 73.47  
*Writes*, enrolls, 99.101  
*Wrought*, past tense of *work*,  
 28.149; had its due effect,  
 57.19  
*y*, adjectives in, 111.51,  
 191.12  
*Yawning*, drowsy, 109.43  
*Yell*, cry aloud, 169.5  
*Yet*, still, 155.100, 172.46,  
 192.34; notwithstanding,  
 174.69  
*Your owne*, to your advan-  
 tage, 32.33  
*Yours*, your families, 99.91  
 z, intervocalic, 152.65  
 Zeugmatic construction, 28.  
 144, 36.22, 101.122, 169.  
 15, 174.68, 182.166, 198.  
 4, 5













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